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A TREATISE
ON THOSE
DISORDERS OF THE BRAIN
AND
NERVOUS SYSTEM,
WHICH ARE USUALLY CONSIDERED AND CALLED
MENTAL.

BY DAVID UWINS, M.D.

Nullus datur limes accuratus inter sanam mentem et vesaniam.—**GREGORY.**

Every nervous disease is a *degree* of insanity.—**REID.**

There is no individual of a "perfectly sound mind."—**HASLAM.**

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CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY—NOSOLOGY, PHRENOLOGY, AND NOMENCLATURE.

CIRCUMSTANCED as is the author of the present treatise in reference to cases of mental aberration, having constantly under his care every grade and every shape of deranged intellect; now being called to visit in the Asylum to which he is professionally attached, the horrible convulsions constituting an epileptic paroxysm, now the circumstances and consequences of an apoplectic seizure; on this day being required to investigate a malady, the features of which may scarcely be visible without painful scrutiny; on another day being placed almost in personal danger by the sufficiently palpable and violent ebullitions of maniacal fury; at one moment having to trace the oftentimes faint line of demarcation between inflammation of the brain, and states simulating it, at the next to aim at ascertaining whether visceral or vascular conditions are the sources, or only the incidents of derangement; being, moreover, in many cases, called on (and sometimes for judicial purposes) to decide the very difficult, but very momentous question, whether acts have been the

result of controllable impulse or exclusive excitation ; it may not be charged upon an individual thus engaged, that he is incompetent to write on insanity, on the ground that what he writes must rather be the closet coinage of his own brain, than the fruits of actual and practical observation.

So far indeed as opinions and deductions may differ from others, such sentiments and inferences are open to free canvass and fair criticism ; but that he speculates without the materials for speculation, or deduces without sufficient data, cannot surely be said of a physician whose official duties—to say nothing of private opportunities—comprise such superintendence as that just alluded to.

I am not desirous of putting forth any boastful pretensions beyond the warranty of truth ; I wish not to conceal that the medical management of the house to which I am physician, is mainly in the hands of a resident and intelligent practitioner ;* and that we moreover receive assistance from a visiting surgeon.† Many of our inmates also have passed through their probationary state, and have been sent to us as incurables ; so that little more can be effected for these than the insurance of as much well-being as their situation admits. It is among

* Mr. Middleton, now of Fore-street, a very efficient officer and excellent man, has but recently left us. He is succeeded by one who promises to be as was Mr. M., every thing desirable. The name of this last gentleman is Norris.

† Mr. Manico, who resides in Peckham, at no great distance from the establishment, and who is highly respected and beloved by all who know him.

the fresh subjects that the chief interest of our vocation consists; it is among them that we are principally called on to witness the vast modifications of wandering intellect, and it is the having to do with them which more especially furnishes materials out of which to construct a treatise on nervous disorders, or on those ailments that are illogically deemed and erroneously designated manifestations of "an unsound mind."

My plan is first to trace out the subject by a broad and general outline; then to present in substance and detail what shall thus have been indicated. This detail will comprehend the essentials of insanity, its prominent manifestations, its sources, exterior and internal, the particulars which present a prospect of recovery, or, on the other hand, menace permanence; appearances found after death; treatment, medical, moral, and domestic; and as resulting from, or rather as constituting portions of this detail, the subjects of confinement, and coercion, and classification will fall under remark, with some other points on which a criminal inattention and cruelty on the one hand, and much abstract reasoning and Utopian feeling on the other, have been too conspicuous; but out of all which much good has already, and will continue to be extracted by those who devote themselves without intimidation and without prejudice, to the important matter of mental alienation, and who constantly think and act under the consciousness that to be honest, moderate, manly, and *really* humane, whether good report

or evil report attend their endeavours, is to pursue the only justifiable policy, and eventually to insure the happiest results.

What is a nervous disorder? In one sense, as well remarked by Dr. Beddoes, *all* maladies are necessarily and essentially nervous; the very term *disease* implying pain, and pain not being producible in any other way than through the medium of the nervous organization.

We often, however, meet with cases in which the perceptions are deranged, without any obvious or demonstrable cause. A physician, for example, shall be called to a female invalid, who, when well, was conspicuously alive to all the duties and delights of maternal relationship; she is now listless, and unsusceptible of either pleasurable or painful emotion. In common parlance she is in a nervous state. If she is told to be “up and active”—if she be appealed to as a wife and mother—if vivid representations are placed before her, respecting the injury she is inflicting both on herself and all about her; she may subscribe to the abstract truth of your *truisms*, but she goes no further. Her belief does not influence her conduct. But let one of her infants be suddenly snatched from the domestic circle by the grasp of disease, and laid probably on the bed of death, and what a change will be instantaneously operated! All the anxieties and alarms of a mother are now called forth from their hiding places; motives and actions are changed. The disorder has disappeared; and thus has incident in-

stantaneously effected what months of prosing and prescribing might in vain have endeavoured to accomplish.

Here let me take occasion to remark, that our nervous invalid, previously to conversion, was equally insane as to essence,—whatever the difference in degree,—with the confirmed, and solitary, and obstinate melancholic, who, amidst crowds of fellow lunatics, each calculated to excite attention and sympathy, is apparently buried in himself, and busied only in his own cogitations; no more regardful of the painful interest spread out before him than would a blind man be delighted by the rich verdure of a British meadow, with all its delicious freshness, or one totally deaf be susceptible of painful excitation by the most unharmonious combination of musical sounds.

That thus in measure, more than in kind, do nervous derangements differ, is, in my judgment, an important principle for regulating practical inference; and as, in the course of these pages, it will be my endeavour to substantiate and illustrate this principle, I have, in this preliminary chapter, adverted to it; desirous as I am it should be understood, that while contending for its rectitude, I am not influenced by any wish to broach extravagant doctrine, or support untenable assumption. My object is merely to simplify in accordance with truth and nature, to show that nosological distinctions and nomenclatural designations are often worse than useless, inasmuch as they are occasionally conceived

in, I was about to say, wanton defiance of good sense and straight-forward observation ; and being thus totally unnatural, they are not only unmeaning, but absolutely insusceptible of any proper bearing upon pathological or practical pursuit.

Erroneous conception, I shall afterwards have occasion to prove, constitutes the main ingredient of positive madness : this misconception, however, may be considered as always more or less engendered out of false perception, so that it is the feeling rather than the conceit which constitutes the radix of the whole. Now this feeling sometimes takes entire possession of the frame, every thing then being regulated by the insane ideas ; at other times the individual is both bodily and mentally well—or rather *being* bodily *is* mentally well—so far as we can refer health to any given standard ; while to one impression only does his understanding give way. To take one out of numerous examples. I have had an interview with a young gentleman of first rate accomplishments, and full of intellectual vigour and propriety, who, immediately you mention the word elephant, whether by design or accident, whether in combination or by itself, is suddenly seized with a species of horrific spasm ; and while the impression lasts, is, to all intents and purposes, a madman.*

* When I was first introduced to this young gentleman, my friend asked him whether he came to town that day by the Elephant and Castle, and the immediate alteration in his countenance was striking to a painful degree ; he, however, by a great effort of his will, overcame the effect, and rejoined the conversation ; when the word was again announced, he rushed out

Now this instance would be named, in the schools, Monomania, and the term is well enough as an expression of occurrence; but to suppose this or any other word capable of being stretched out into theory, or of embodying an abstraction, is to proceed upon assumptions altogether vain and visionary—it is to endeavour at giving essence and being to what is a mere circumstantial quality; and that practitioner would be quite as philosophical in his nomenclature as these nosological classifiers, who should say of individuals in the same house, labouring under fever, that one had got “a Jack, and the other a Tom fever.”

Monomaniacal misconception will be again adverted to, when we shall be considering the circumstances and treatment of insanity more in detail; I now proceed to remark, that a question of much interest and nicety protrudes itself on the very outset of disquisitions respecting the nature of the malady, especially when our notions are limited to erroneous conceit as its essential characteristic. It will often be the duty of a medical counsellor to determine whether an act committed in a perturbed state of nerve and brain have been the absolute

of the room, as if this second sounding was beyond his endurance, and we saw him no more.

It is curious that he connects some kind of allusion to himself, whenever he hears this shibboleth uttered. He was once standing in a stationer's shop, when a lady came in and asked for some elephant paper; he immediately took up a parcel from the counter, and hurled it at her, as an assailant of his peace.

consequence of an uncontrollable impulse, or one which the due exercise of mental power might have checked in purpose, and prevented in perpetration. Writers on madness have been puzzled, even perhaps beyond their own consciousness, in attempts at definition of the insane state, from the source of difficulty now referred to, and as will more clearly appear when I am treating on definition, a sort of provisional or gratuitous clause has been appended to their account of essentials. Now part of this difficulty is founded on the fact of our almost necessary ignorance respecting the motives actuating another individual, and the internal workings of another's mind. It is easy, for instance, to condemn suicide as a deed of criminality or cowardice, but before we can substantiate our charge thus sweepingly brought, we must be sure of the precise condition of nerve at the time of perpetration of the deed. On this head, likewise, I shall have again to dwell afterwards somewhat more at large, and I here merely advert to, by way of illustrating the exceeding nicety attending all disquisitions on the subject of insanity, when delusion, and delusion alone, is allowed to be its constituent. Passion is certainly not madness, if misconception only is ; and yet, to distinguish the impulse of misconception from the impulse of fury is often to prove ourselves in a degree mad, by manifesting that we judge by mistake. A part of this difficulty may be met by recognizing those extremely rapid changes of feeling and belief which run through the maniac's

mind. "Avoid me, or I shall do you an injury," says the insane sometimes to those about him; but why not perform the purpose without giving the warning? Because the individual is now only excited. Under the subsequent delusion he commits some enormity, and then contrition rushes as speedily among his feelings, as did the previous delusion. This hurry of changes is forcibly pourtrayed, in a late work on insanity by Dr. Gonolly; it may, and probably has been compared to the circle of light which is formed by a revolving spark, and which light, though only of course actually present at one point, seems to our perception to be in the whole circle at the same instant.

There are, indeed, many instances in which a fixed, determined purpose is, day after day, and year after year, contemplated by the maniac, he only awaiting a favourable time for the execution of the same; such an instance we have in that forcibly pourtrayed account of Norris, in Bedlam, given by Dr. Haslam; but in these cases the revenge and its consequences are evidently grounded in mistake, otherwise a prison, and not a mad-house, would be the proper security of the patient. But if madness be crime, and crime madness, there is an end of the matter. It is not, however, so; there must, I repeat, be some mistake or misconception mixed up with the emotions of the mind in mental disorder, otherwise, as I have elsewhere remarked, we go a considerable way towards demolishing all the landmarks which stand between virtue and vice; we

commiserate moral ill precisely as we do mental alienation ; since, then, criminality in all its extent resolves itself into organic necessity, and the hand of the assassin is urged by the same impulse as that which directs the wild beast of the forest in springing upon its prey, or the foaming cataract in rushing down the mountain steep !

We shall afterwards, as above intimated, have occasion to notice that much of practical and judicial importance attaches itself to the problem, whether actual madness may be predicated without positive delusion ; here the topic is only introduced in a preliminary or introductory manner ; but even here it may be permitted me to remark, that if motive be thus the measure of insanity, and if nervous disorders, in all their grades, are the same in essence, a vast field spreads itself out before us, in reference both to individual responsibility, and the due appreciation of preventive circumstance. Only for a moment let us turn our thoughts to the difference produced in the feelings and conduct of a person after he shall have taken a few glasses of wine, or a single grain of opium. Then let us extend our contemplation over the whole range of various excitation, to which we are all exposed necessarily, or to which we voluntarily subject ourselves ; and the surprize will be, that so many do so well as is found to be the case ; and it will, moreover, be made, one should think, sufficiently evident, that to graduate disorder by the scale of nosology, and to separate into so many distinct abstractions, as some

attempt, is a vain attempt. Nay, the endeavour implies a violation of all rectitude. Mental, or rather nervous, like all other malady, is *circumstantial*, not abstract.

But what, it will be asked, is the condition of nerve and brain, when disorder becomes confirmed and conspicuous? To this question the reply is not easy. When discoursing on the pathology of nervous derangement, we shall have to adduce several conditions of the organization implicated, some more and some less demonstrative and satisfactory, in the way of explication; change, indeed, of external shewing cannot well be conceived without change of internal state; but who shall pronounce upon the precise nature of that change in the sentient organization, when unexpected intelligence instantaneously destroys a keen appetite? when madness occurs as the immediate result of some heart-rending disappointment? when the whole man is thoroughly, and in a moment, revolutionized by a change of scene and circumstance? or when faith in a physician at once breaks down the strong holds of hitherto confirmed disease?

Under slower and successive operation of excitants, visible and appreciable alteration, as will afterwards be noticed, manifests itself in connexion with, if not as a source of, deranged consciousness; and I may here briefly cite the case of Jurieu, as mentioned by Beddoes. This poor man locked himself in his study, for the purpose of scanning thoroughly the meaning of St. John's Revelation. The con-

finement, exclusion from fresh air, and anxiety which the determination brought with it, came at length so to derange his feelings and secretions as to occasion spasms, and pains, and flatulence. The concomitant or result of all this perturbation was a conceit that the Beast of blasphemy with ten heads, and ten horns, and ten crowns on his horns, had made good his lodgment within him, and was rending and gnawing his vitals.

Now, in these, and such like cases, the visccral disorder aggravates, to say the least, the brain and nerve sickness; but it must also be confessed, that on the one hand the heights and depths of the former (visceral affection) are often developed, though without any consequent or antecedent misconception; and on the other, the conceptions will not seldom maintain their wonted integrity, in spite of chylopoietic disturbance, be it great or little. Clouds upon the feelings are, in many cases, much more dcpendant upon clouds and electric changes in the atmosphere, than they are upon what is going on in the digestive apparatus: it was prettily said, by Van Helmont I believe, that the archer, though shooting at the head, often takes his stand on the stomach; but he, at least, quite as often sends his arrows, winged with electric impulse immdiatelv from the ethereal matter that is about us, and is himself almost as aerial and unsubstantial as any of the sylphs and gnomes of which Pope sings so sweetly in his delightful poem, the Rape of the Lock. But of this more in another place.

As on all hands, and by all theorists, it is admitted that the brain and nerves are in some mode or other the media of perception and consciousness, writers on madness have evinced an anxiety to acquire a knowledge of the laws by which these organs and their functions are regulated, on this ground; that, could we ascertain the precise circumstances of mental health, we should be better qualified to mark out and map those manifold deviations from it, to which all are obnoxious. But philosophers and physiologists, in their researches on this head, have all egregiously failed. The $\piοv\ στω$ has ever eluded the research of the metaphysician, so much so, that the reader of these pages would be but ill repaid for his trouble, were I to attempt any thing like a detail of successive doctrines:—and, if metaphysicians have been bad—medico-metaphysicians have been still worse. “*All* medical doctrines,” says Dr. James Gregory, in his blunt and forcible manner, “are stark staring nonsense;” and it cannot be denied, that the disputationes of the schools afford considerable justification to this sweeping condemnation of pathological theory. Thought, says one writer, is a secretion from the brain, as bile is from the liver. Ideas, says another, are vibrations and vibratiuncles. A third calls them configurations of the organs of sense. These are all modern—very modern conceits—and the individuals who have broached them are men of high intellect, and of moral worth. In what, however, do the conceits themselves differ from, but

in their being more vague and unphilosophical than the phantasms of Plato, the Pineal gland of Descartes, and the Archæus of Helmont?

Whence all this nothingness of abstract speculation? Why it is *because* the inquiries have been abstract, that they have so lamentably failed. The essential distinction has been lost sight of between final and efficient cause. A point has been assumed, where matter ends, and mind begins; analogies have been eagerly sought for, while it has not been duly considered that the very terms mind and matter are gratuitous, and in no wise expressive of essence. Thus philosophy has been made a species of poetry—to “airy nothings” have been given “habitations and names”—and the whole fabric of medico-metaphysical speculation comes out to be merely formed of “the stuff which dreams are made of.”

Has the new organology at all assisted our extrication from these “muddy depths of everlasting nonsense?” Have they sent physiological and pathological researches into the right path of pursuit? Have Gall or Spurzheim thrown out any intimations respecting mind, or rather its media, which may prove at last *ad rem*? or do these psycologists still bind us in those delusive tracks, which lead to that delightfully dread abode, the Castle of Doubt—“delightfully”—O, yes! I wish, when thinking of it, to be young again, in order to enjoy its picturesque beauty, as magnificently pourtrayed by its great delineator, with the appendages of its grim ruler,

Giant Despair, and the restless, uxorious upbraiding of his anti-christian and anti-hopeful wife—but “*tempora mutantur*, and, alas! *nos mutamur*.”

In attempting a reply to the above questions, I expect it will be my fate not to satisfy either party. There is still, to my seeming, a great deal of mental circumstance quite inexplicable upon, if not in opposition to, the tenets of the phrenologists ; but at the same time I am of opinion, that to the ingenious theorists just named, physiology is much indebted.

The good that the science has already accomplished, consists in its having discarded imaginative reasoning, and sent it back to its proper province ; and in having taught us to regard every thing that concerns the living principle as futile and unsubstantial, beyond what can be made out upon the common principle of physics ; of the *how* and wherefore it does not profess to take cognizance.

Mind, it had hitherto been assumed, was a something connected with the thinking principle in the way of totality, and the especial faculties of perception, memory, abstraction, and imagination, were the result of its particular workings : but how, says the organologist, if this were the case, would we explain the superior and innate, or at least congenital adroitness of this individual in the computation of numbers, of that in the perception of sounds ? Why is this man from his birth a philologist, that a mathematician ? Were perception a distinct faculty, and were varieties merely varieties in the measure of mental power, how could the dull

in physical pursuit be alive and alert in the investigation of moral science? How could it come to pass that the youthful constructor of machinery should not be able to construct, with equal facility and readiness, the metrical number or the flowing sentence?

That these objections are forcibly opposed to the doctrine of the faculties, as taught by the metaphysicians, all must admit; nor can the difficulty be done away with, by referring to the principle of early impression, or accidental association, since, of two children, brought up in the same nursery, and trained precisely under the same tuition, one shall show, from its infancy, a tendency to one thing, the other to another thing. One will be altogether careless how affairs are brought about, so that he has enjoyment in what is before him; the other has no pleasure, even in the most common toy, without desiring to look into its interior, and to ascertain the source and mode of its workings. Again, one reads and spells with avidity, and is already a verbal critic in miniature; the other chops and carves fragments of wood into rude copies of things he has about him, and thus, by his very acts of infancy, calls upon papa early to initiate him into the principles and practice of mechanism.

The moral disposition also differs, even from the dawn of existence. This will show, by the first cry he utters, that he is about to be troublesome and wayward; that will manifest meekness and docility, through the same medium; and as they grow up

we shall find one to mix mercy even with its most wanton sports, while a sort of cruelty shall constitute the very essence of sport in the other.

To multiply instances, however, in proof of original diversity of character, were quite useless, as they must, by all, have been observed ; and the only question of interest that can connect itself with the admitted fact is, " how may these truths be philosophically or physiologically accounted for ? "

We will suppose twenty individuals to be selected from others, as marked by conspicuous high-mindedness or self-esteem ; and each of these to have a particular fulness in the formation of the upper and back part of the head ; this being an index of brain development or fulness in that part, it might be fair, hypothetically, to suppose that such construction in the cerebral mass indicated always this particular temperament ; but the proof would not be complete unless you could select another twenty of different feeling and consciousness, and find in each and all of these last the formation referred to wanting. Were, however, this second series as uniform as the first, nothing short of unjustifiable scepticism would refuse to admit that such and such an exterior denotes, *cæteris paribus*, such and such a disposition. In this way did Gall originally pursue his investigations ; and in this way was he brought to the inference, that the several innate or organic powers go together, to the formation of the sum total of character, the perfection of the character not consisting in the superabundance of this or that faculty, but in

the proper balance and due adjustment of the whole; irregularities conduced to aberrations in the degree and measure of their existence.

To illustrate. If one of the twenty individuals, marked by nature with pride and self-conceit, be at the same time strong and full in those organs which are the media of mechanic skill, this individual will not only be himself satisfied that he has the capability of affecting much in the way of mechanism, but he actually is so capable. Now let both of these faculties be too much indulged, or unduly fostered by the extravagant praises of others, our proud mechanist will not be long in coming to estimate even his especial talent at, by far, too high a rate; scarcely any thing is too difficult, and he proceeds from step to step till he mounts up to the height of more than mortal prowess; he feels that he is born to excel and to benefit his fellow men by prodigious exploits. From those around him he may now receive ridicule in place of their former flattery, a conflict of sentiment occupies his mind, and the result of the whole is a madhouse! “I intend,” said one of these high-minded madmen to another, “to throw bridges over the English Channel; and I, said the other, am going to drain the Mediterranean, and plant it with apple-trees.” A youth has been just with me whom I knew when an infant; he has grown up with high perceptive and imaginative powers, and is, moreover, full and large in self-estimation. Scarcely yet more than a boy, he has sent problems and questions to different pro-

fessors ; he tells me nothing comes amiss to him, he knocks off poetry for his sister's musical compositions as an amusement ; he condescends, indeed, to scribble for the ephemeral publications of the day ; but he is ready to prepare any youth for any university !

“ What a fine instance,” will the phrenologists say, “ of the rectitude of our principles.” But the opposers of phrenology will be ready to ask, how are reason, and good sense, and moral principle, and honour, and religion capable of preserving the mental adjustment and balance in sane individuals, while, by the organist's own showing, these very checks and preventives are the result of organization ? To this objection it might be replied, we have nothing to do with consequences ; nor does the *onus probandi* of how things take place rest with us. For myself, however, I would venture to urge, (supposing I am a convert to the creed of the phrenologist,) that free will and counteracting motive are, and always have been, and always will be, unsolved problems. I would say further, that all doctrines suppose, nay, that all observation demonstrates natural and congenital differences, both of capacity and disposition : and I would, moreover, contend (whether consistently with phrenology or not, I do not care) that there is a perception of good and evil, which teaches all to war against natural bias ; and that this perception, confessedly more acute in some individuals than in others, and in the same person under varying circumstances, is only then thoroughly suspended or extinguished, when the physical has

borne down and defeated the moral man: all short of this is but insanity in degree; and the distinction between madness and crime is to be sought for in a modification of the principle to which we now advert, and about which I shall have more to say in another place.

I might be expected here to enlarge on the anatomical and physiological grounds of phrenological inference, but this investigation would lead me into too wide a field; and I am, besides, anxious to avoid the imputation of partizanship; one especial circumstance ought, however, to be here alluded to, because, if fully established, it would absolutely prove the general rectitude of the science under remark; and show, moreover, that a very important use may be made of it in the way of education, or in other words, of mental training and discipline. I might have longed, while looking at the young genius just mentioned, to have the power of scooping a little out of one portion of the cerebral mass, that another might more freely expand itself; now, that we may actually accomplish these organic changes, not indeed in the regular way of the trephine and scalpel, but in the more indirect mode of culture and pruning, the physiologists of the new school show you facts to prove. It has actually been made out that the shape or form of the skull are regulated by the pursuits of the man—aye—even of grown—adult, man; and it therefore follows, that this or that propensity may be kept at bay, and finally vanquished, by calling the mind off from in-

dulgence, and by exercising those organs which are the media of opposing inclination. Mr. Déville showed me, among many other examples of this principle, one particular cast of the head of an individual, who commenced his career in life with very high promise of intellectual eminence and moral worth: for a time, this individual cultivated and improved his understanding during every successive day; he then fell into habits of idleness and sensuality; and lastly, in the way we are told of that great man, Dr. Paley, he roused himself into mental pursuits and practices, and shook off the old man, of mere carnality or worldly existence. The cast at each epoch answered exactly to the character. You would say of the first, "*that* is the head of a powerful, and intellectual individual;" the one taken during the second stage was manifestly swelling out, in the animal portions of the brain; while the reverse organization was as decided and impressive in the third and grandest period; the bust looked indeed as if it were only waiting for animation to push up more and more the philosophical points, and bulge out into larger and larger expansion of moral thought and mental capacity.*

* In these physiological facts, some may discover matter wherewith to meet the objections on the score of organization being the cause and measure of intellectual and moral condition—change, it might be urged by the phrenologist, is the *consequence*, rather than source, of proper or improper working of the mental energies; and an individual properly educated, is as responsible for the formation of his head, as he is for the preservation of stomach integrity—“Who,” says Dr. Beddoes,

That these changes are capable of being effected on living structure, even when bone is to be altered in its formation, the physiologist well knows, and the mutation now spoken of, is produced not by mere expansion, but by absorption and re-deposit of particles, precisely in the manner that the arms and chest of a waterman, and the legs and heels of a dancer, are moulded according to their relative measure and kind of exercise.

Let me not, however, slide insensibly into the language of system. I am only desirous that the doctrines of Gall be tried by their own merits ; and let every one enquire for himself, before he gives in to a scheme of philosophy which sets at nought all that he has been accustomed to think legitimate and applicable in abstract metaphysics ; there is certainly “ no comeliness, nor any thing to be desired” in phrenology, unless it be founded in nature and based upon truth.*

“ with a mind properly regulated, could bear to think of his having converted his stomach into a distended and puffed-up bag ?” “ Who,” might the disciple of Gall say, “ could endure the consciousness of having, by his own acts and deeds, swelled out the animal part of his cerebral organization, into undue and disgusting magnitude ?”

* It is a curious fact, that the reasoning of Dr. Thomas Brown, one of the ablest men that Scotland has produced, is very similar to that of the phrenologists, in opposition to the general faculty school. The difference is rather that the phrenologist makes it a matter of anatomy, and physiology, and pathology ; while Brown’s doctrines, (which, by the way, were rather subsequent to Gall’s than prior) are broached more in the manner of a metaphysical system.

It may be thought that the principles I have thus endeavoured briefly to propound, militate against the position contended for, that nervousness and insanity are but degrees and varieties of the same condition; but it might be urged in reply, that although weakness of nerves constitutes the radix of aberration, the manner in which such aberration manifests itself, would be regulated by the organic proportions of the brain: in harmony with this assumption, the remarkable fact might be adduced of especial dislikes where former attachments have been equally strong, upon the principle that there is a tendency in extremes to meet; then again nervous indisposition might exist in so large a measure, as to interfere with cerebral organization; I sit at this moment, for instance, surrounded by books and papers, huddled together in such sort as to appear inconsistent with the perception of order, a great degree of which I am sensible of possessing. Why is this? it is because a constitutional indolence or irresolution prevents me from obeying the commands of brain confirmation; and I am thus apparently equally disorderly with an individual who has much less of propensity to the contrary feeling—apparently, I say, because I am annoyed at my own inactivity and its consequences, while the same condition of surrounding things would not be felt by another, as any annoyance at all.

Thus have I endeavoured to state the method in which the phrenologist connects innate connexion of character and conformation; and if in the ex-

cution of my task, a proneness to think with the doctrine has been evident, I must still protest against conviction beyond evidence. I will even go further, and repeat, that to my conception a vast deal is still wanting, to explain satisfactorily the physiological bearing of structure upon function. When treating a little more in detail upon what is called the pathology of madness, it will be in course again to refer to the principles in question ; I now close these preliminary remarks by reiterating the position with which they commenced—namely, that mere nervousness, as it is vaguely termed, and insanity, as it is almost as vaguely assumed, are absolutely identical ; and inasmuch as we are without an actual standard of mental propriety, the deviations from a supposed point, are not susceptible of nosological demarcations.

CHAPTER II.

DEFINITION. ESSENTIALS.

IF the correctness of the position be admitted, that nervous aberration is a matter of degree rather than kind, it follows that those brief summings up, as it were, of its essentials, which are called definitions, cannot be effected with absolute accuracy: for without a standard of mental health, deviations from it are necessarily in some measure erroneously assumed. It may be at first sight conceived, that the difficulty now alluded to is increased, rather than diminished, by supposing all men to be at times insane; but, in point of fact, this assumption rather helps us towards correctness of definition, than otherwise. Who is there that may not be misconceiving or mistaking every day that he lives; and what is madness, when it even mounts up to the height of ungovernable fury, but a *misconception*?

It will, however, be expected that we discuss the question of essentials a little more technically, and by remarking those definitions that have obtained in the schools of medicine; and we now, therefore, proceed in the execution of this task.

Insanity, says one writer, differs from sanity, inasmuch as it is formed of erroneous judgment and irrational conduct. This account is palpably obnoxious to the objection of "erroneous" and "irrational," being terms upon which a variety of sentiment obtains, according to the various perceptions and opinions of men. Nor do we approximate more to truth by saying "that mental alienation consists in the want of correspondence between the estimate and real value of things." "If every one," says Darwin; "who possesses mistaken ideas, or puts false estimates on things, were liable to confinement, I know not who of my readers might not tremble at the sight of a madhouse." Even the objector to the above definition admits too much. The *real* value! who is to be the judge of this? Neither the miser on the one hand, nor the voluptuary on the other, sets a just estimate on the value of gold; if that value is to be determined by the umpireship of a third, who would neither have any gratification in keeping money merely to contemplate it, or hug to his bosom the bags which contain it—nor in converting this money into materials calculated, in their undue use, to make him mad. But, then, the umpire's own estimate merely accords with his taste and feeling, and cannot, therefore, be taken as the standard of rectitude.

Darwin's definition is founded on his particular philosophy. He tells us that madness "is an excess of action in the sensorial power of volition." Dr. Brown, however, to whom we alluded in a note a

page or two back, sets this matter at rest in his masterly answer to the *Zoonomia*, in which work, proving insanity be a disorder of motive rather than will, he proves Darwin's notion of excess of volition to be altogether unfounded. Either Dr. Brown, or some one else, I am not quite sure, indeed, whether it is not Dr. Beddoes, objects to the theory and definition now under notice, by stating that the "Macedonian madman," "the Swede," and Napoleon Buonaparte, were really and substantially out of their senses, if an excess of volition constitute this change from health to disease.

In that very entertaining section of the *Zoonomia* which is devoted to the subject of hallucination, it is stated that a gentleman called in all his servants, and ordered them to strip before him, that he might examine them naked. When under confinement for this mad act, he was prevailed on to tell his physician, that having got the itch, and being assured that he must have contracted it from some one of his domestics, he was desirous to ascertain which had been the imparter of it. This gentleman was without the smallest trace of the disorder of which he conceived himself the subject; and the malady consisted in false conception, which, had it been well founded, would have proved the consequent exercise of volition not to be so very much out of the way. In like manner, if with Dr. Watts I suppose, or conceive, or believe the door through which I am to pass is too small, I will, or order its dimensions to be increased, my volition is not beyond what the conceit would justify;

nor does the mad philosopher in Rasselias manifest any overplus of volition, while imagining he had the power to rule the elements, he commands here the thunder to roll, and there the rain to fall. “ *Non male ratiocinatur sed potius furens decipitur qui Jovem, se credens Jovis fulmina jaceret.*”

Exalted imagination, or as Dr. Mead has it, “ increased strength of imagination,” may not be deemed madness, or else who more mad than our immortal bard? And here I may remark with Haslam, that “ the strength or increase of any power of the mind, cannot constitute a disease of it.” Why did not the sublime imaginings of Shakspeare turn his brain? precisely because he had corresponding powers by which to curb and controul his almost superhuman conceptions; and to prevent sublimity from passing into absurdity. How different are Shakspeare’s very highest soarings from the body and soul conceits of Blake, where the parting of one from the other are delineated by two fac similes—only the soul is a little more attenuated and flying out of the window, while the body is lying prostrate, in consequence of the separation of what could never, according to this representation, have been combined with it. And Blake, I believe, throughout many years of his life, was full of wild conceits and superstitious notions; in common parlance, was “ out of his senses.”

Dr. Arnold divides insanity into notional and ideal. When that state of mind is present in which a person imagines he hears or sees things which have no external existence, or perceives external

objects as they really exist, yet has erroneous ideas of his own form, and other sensible qualities, he is ideally mad. Notional madness, on the other hand, consists in a person hearing or seeing external objects as they really exist as objects of sense, yet conceives such notions of their powers, properties, &c., as appear unreasonable to the common sense of the sober and judicious part of mankind. Against the legitimacy of this last account, we have already entered our protest; and as to ideal insanity, we are always liable to err in attributing modes of perception to others, as if we had the means of ascertaining what they really are. Till within a few weeks since, we had a patient in Peckham, who was constantly looking at a piece of thread or string, which he held before his eyes, and seemed as if he thought it was a letter from his wife that he was reading. Now that this man was erroneous in his conception of what he had before him, was sufficiently manifest; but it does not follow that we could so easily ascertain what he really did see as an object of perception, and therefore, upon Arnold's own principles, it could not very clearly be made out whether this was a case of notional or ideal insanity.

Our more mad moments do certainly differ from our more sane ones in perception, being so perverse as to derange our judgment, or rather, as Dr. Connolly expresses it, and before him Dr. Thomas Brown, as to break in upon our comparing powers, insomuch, as stated by the latter, an individual supposing or feeling himself to be a monarch, "con-

nects ideas of grandeur with every thing around him. His seat is a throne, his chamber a palace, his keepers regal guards." But then mark this want of *keeping* in the case: these regal guards shall order him to do this, or abstain from that, and he submissively obeys, forgetting, as it should seem, for the moment, that in consistency with his first perception, he ought to be the commander himself, and not the commanded. These inconsistencies, it will be recollected, we before adverted to, and they admit of no other explanation than of the rapid transitions from one perception to another, by which the condition of madness is characterized.

After all, delusion is the mainspring of insanity: this is nothing more than misconception, misapprehension, or mistake; short of this delusion we may be violent, or passionate, or wayward, or melancholic, or criminal; but we are not mad; and some, I am sorry to say, may apply the strong language of Meg Merrilies to their own cases, and exclaim with her, (I quote from memory,) "I have been shunned for mad, I have been scorned for mad, I have been scourged for mad, I have been imprisoned for mad—but mad I am not." We may still speak "the words of truth and soberness," whether we do so under the most melancholy depression, with the most enthusiastic excitation, in the spirit of querulousness and discontent, for the most vicious purpose, or with the courtesy and rectitude of the great Apostle. Madness, says Sauvages, is the *dream* of him who is awake; and dreaming, says

the defender of the phrenological creed, consists in the activity of one organ of the brain, while others are at rest; so that conceptions become misconceptions from want of balancing powers; these misconceptions being strong or weak, running upon one point, or running upon another, according to the intensity of the exciting agent, the particular portion of sensorium implicated, the nervous strength or weakness of the individual affected, and the mode in which the affection is met and treated by others. But dreaming, or in other words, imperfect sleep, differs from the condition of actual madness, inasmuch as there are in it no correctives against aberration, from the senses; when these are called into exercise all the lofty conceits and wild combinations of the dreamer, are in a moment over; while they continue in the mad despite of the sensual information—nay, the workings of the brain seem occasionally to change these sensual guards against aberration into actual ministers of misconception. But we must not anticipate our pathological inquiry, the business of the present section being principally that of remarking on the constituents of lunacy.*

* The phenomena characterizing that remarkable condition of the brain and nerves which leads to sleep-walking, might probably be adduced in favour of the principle that one series of organs may be active while another is dormant. It is well known that the perceptions are so exceedingly acute in sleep-walkers as to enable them to pass over narrow bridges, &c. the very contemplation of which they have shuddered at when awake. Is not this superior adroitness referrible to the suspended agency

In respect to the kinds and shapes of it as marked out by authors, the reader will already have perceived that I do not attach much value to them. *Melancholia*—why we are all melancholic at times from misconception. *Mania*, who is there that has not been at one period or another irritated beyond measure by misapprehension? *Monomania*, or misconception on one point. What light do we throw upon this feeling by giving it a hard name! Of *Hypochondriasis* we have plenty of instances in the present day, much short of mad-house dreamers, since the stomach has been considered every thing, and every thing the stomach. Even *Idiotcy* may be monoidiotism, as seems to have been the case in the Baxter instance; and we are all more or less idiotic, if the term implies congenital want of power. An Oxford professor, and an erudite man too, attempted again and again, but without success, to learn the art and mystery of whist playing—it was no want of disposition that occasioned the want of capacity, because his earnest desire was to acquire a know-

of other parts of the brain, rather than to a positive augmentation of power in the parts in exercise? and is not this the pivot or mainspring upon which aberration turns and depends? Wake a sleep-walker and he is immediately alive to his danger—prove to a maniac the untenable nature of his assumptions, and he is directly conscious of, or *awake* to all his insane wanderings. But, unhappily, day-dreamers, whether in or out of a mad-house, are not restored to their *senses* with so much facility as you can open the senses, and thereby put to flight the visions of the sleeper, or the perceptions of the sleep-walker.

ledge and facility in the game. An angel from heaven, says Fuseli, could never give me the comprehension of mathematics ; and every one has heard of the philosopher's inquiry, after having read Milton's epic from beginning to end, “*Cui bono?* What does it all mean? What does it prove?”

Dementia is the idiocy of old age or of accident, or of overworking, or of letting lie altogether fallow the mental powers, and the same objections may be taken, as in the other cases, to the specification of it as an essence ; for I still repeat my conviction, that there is much more propriety in saying a man is *so* idiotic, or *so* stupid, or *so* mindless, or *so* melancholic, or *so* *mad*, as to render it necessary that he should be deprived of the right of a rational creature ; than imputing any specific or essential disorder, as a something coming upon an individual in a wholesale or abstract way.

—οὐ γὰρ αἴντος πάντ' ἐπίστασθαι Βροτῶν

Πέφυκεν· ἄλλω δὲ ἄλλο πρόσκειται γέρας—

Or should a Latin exemplification be preferred, we may employ the learned Partridge's quotation, a little changed in order to suit our present purpose.

Nemo omnibus rebus sapit.

Horis, indeed would do, for who among the best and wisest can maintain that his conceptions and comprehensions are at all times the same? “All my philosophy,” says a French writer, “in which I was so warmly engaged in the morning, seems stuff and nonsense to me after I have dined ;”

and without intrenching in the slightest measure upon the awful ground of man's moral responsibility, we may aver, that even conscience is more or less acute in its stings, according to the physical circumstances of the sufferer. “I have sinned against the Holy Ghost, and am therefore in a state of irreconcilable reprobation,” was the constant theme and song of a person whom my friend Dr. Clutterbuck had under his care. This notion originated from the patient having, many years previously, likened the fluttering of a bird towards the ground, to the descent of the Holy Spirit on the head of the Saviour. But why did not the contrition and the madness immediately succeed the levity, if they were to do so at all? Most assuredly because the profane expression was deemed of little moment at the time, but must have been recalled by the memory, under some particular condition of the frame, which rendered the man more alive to religious obligation. In like manner a patient of my own had a fit of epilepsy, occasioned by having dreamt with horror, in the night, of what she had been doing the preceding day, without any feeling at the time of doing it, that there was much in the act beyond the mere fun of it; the act was that of joining some companions in pelting with stones those disgusting figures—remains of bodies—which, till within these few years, were to be seen gibbeted on the shores of the Thames.

So important is it (if I may in any way forestal what will be afterwards advanced on the head of

preventives,) so all important is it on every account in our passage through life, to be careful of saying and doing those things that are likely to preserve self-respect and sane consciousness ; and of leaving unsaid and undone those things that are at least equivocal, and bordering upon what is wrong ; and so true is the exclamation of an anonymous writer, when alluding to the uncertain tenure of the most valuable of our possessions, viz. intellect, as little as possible unincumbered by corporeal desecration, “ *il ne faut qu'un léger accident qu'un atome déplacé pour te fair peri, pour te ravir cette intelligence dont tu parois si fier !* ”

CHAPTER III.

PROGRESS OF SYMPTOMS. GENERAL CHARAC- TERISTICS.

A HISTORY of insanity, taken in its widest acceptation, must in some sort be a history of disorder generally: for there is no part or portion of the bodily fabric which is not at times implicated with, or even primarily affected, before what is termed the mental derangement manifests itself. Apoplexy, epilepsy, are proverbially both cause and consequence of insanity. Brain affections, indeed, of all kinds and degrees, whether with or without specific designations, (and, by the way, these specific names are often as ill-applied as the term insanity itself,) are sources or accompaniments of injured intellect. The whole nervous system may be seen at times engaged with disease, which shall at length localize itself, as it were, and thus shall hysteria pass into lunacy. Liver complaints are so conspicuously accompanied by distressed feeling, that some theorists have looked upon the liver as the Pandora's box, containing madness or melancholy, with every other morbid affection that flesh is heir to. In the same way other generalizers have regarded the stomach as the origin, or at

least the main link, in all aberration either from physical or mental well-being.

That females are especially obnoxious to mental wanderings, from varied conditions of the uterine organization, will be seen in the sequel. The spleen was anciently connected in notion with melancholy, and we still talk metonymically of "the spleen," as of an actual disorder. That the heart, both metaphorically and literally, has to do with mental suffering all are aware—even pulmonary states are sometimes alternated, and therefore, in a sympathetic, if not direct way, connected with insanity. Fever produces and suspends madness; and, in a word, there is no disorder, hidden or manifest, which may not, in the predisposed, come to implicate, either generally or partially, temporarily or permanently, the mental faculties and functions.

When, moreover, aberrations of feeling and intellect occur more directly, or in a less intermediate manner, every individual case may be looked upon as a fresh study—bringing with it its own peculiar incidents, and special features; so that a history of lunacy can never be properly regarded in any other light than as a collection of the more general and prominent circumstances by which it is characterized. When, for instance, the deranged condition is rather of gloom than of lively excitement, the progressive steps of the malady are for the most part more tardy—the temper and temperament, naturally melancholic, becomes gradually more conspicuously so—inattention to the duties and restrictions of social life insensibly

gain upon the individual—peevishness and querulousness not seldom take place of indolence and quietude—the eye becomes suspicious, and at length the whole expression of countenance marks an alienation from the bonds and ties of kindred and friends; it is, indeed, one of the most common circumstances of confirmed aberration, whether of the low or high kind, that aversion is in the direct ratio of attachment. I was a little time since called to see a youth, one of whose misconceptions was that of believing his own father to be a substituted, instead of a real parent; and the horror of his expressions, proceeding from this false apprehension, could scarcely be described.

Then, again, how frequently we witness almost the first showing of madness to be that of committing violence upon, or at the best conceiving aversion or indifference for progeny. I once went the round of Bethlehem with a thorough phrenologist, who, when he came to a woman that was confined for having murdered her infant, felt for the love of progeny projection, with expectation, I believe, of finding it small. In this he was wrong upon his own principles. The very excess of attachment often leads to these horrible manifestations of excess. Does not ancient history—do not modern times—furnish examples of violence done to the most beloved object? and this not from the madness of revengeful jealousy, as would seem to have been the motive with the murderer of Miss Ray, but from the extreme of sexual attachment; and occurrences of this sort often involve the most puzzling points for de-

cision, whether passion or delusion—crime or madness—have been the impulse of action. At this moment there is a man confined in Horsemonger jail, who dashed his youngest child's head against the wall of his room with such force, as to cause instantaneous death. I had, having seen this perturbed individual some time before, predicted positive insanity in the course of a few months ; my evidence to this point became, of course, material on the trial, but I very believe both Judge and Jury listened to the suggestions of mercy in deciding upon the deed as a deed of madness.

When we contemplate these vast varieties and degrees of passion and delusion, we must, I repeat, be convinced that almost every case of aberration has its own peculiar features ; and that, therefore, a “ history of insanity” cannot be drawn up with any thing like absolute rectitude. The following narration, however, of consecutive occurrences is nearer to accuracy than any I have seen ; it is from the pen of an author who stands almost unrivalled among present-day writers in the power of graphic delineation, and whose works, indeed, throughout, show a master-mind. His theories, perhaps, are a little too philosophical, and his readers are carried away on *έπεια πτεροεντα*, to the Horntooke school of verbal, and not seldom mistaken analogies. But to our history.

“ The coming on of madness,” says Dr. Haslam, “ is marked by restlessness. Insane patients become uneasy, and incapable of confining their attention ; they neglect their accustomed employment ;—they

get but little sleep;—they are loquacious and positive on any subject that may be started;—soon after they are divested of all restraint in the declaration of their opinion of those with whom they are acquainted;—their friendships are expressed with fervency and extravagance—their enmities with intolerance and disgust. They now become impatient of contradiction, and scorn reproof. For supposed injuries they are inclined to quarrel and fight with all about them. They have all the appearance of persons inebriated, and people unacquainted with the symptoms of approaching mania, generally suppose them to be in a state of intoxication. At length suspicion creeps into the mind, they are aware of plots that had never been contrived, and detect motives that were never entertained: at last the succession of ideas becomes too rapid to be examined; the mind becomes crowded with thoughts, and indiscriminately jumbles them together; insanity is established. Patients (our author continues) under the influence of the depressing passions, will exhibit a different train of symptoms. The countenance wears an anxious and gloomy aspect; they retire from the company of those with whom they had formerly associated, seclude themselves in obscure places, or lie in bed the greatest part of their time. They next become fearful; and when irregular combinations of ideas have taken place, conceive a thousand fancies, often recur to some former immoral act they have committed, or imagine themselves guilty of crimes they never perpetrated—believe that God has abandoned them,

and with trembling await his punishment. Frequently they become desperate; and endeavour with their own hands to terminate an existence, which appears to be an afflicting and hateful incumbrance."

The observer of mad persons will notice that their walk is exceedingly characteristic. If the place in which the maniac moves is even very limited, and he has to turn round and repace his steps every minute, there will be an impetuosity remarked in his movements, as if he were about to march miles in one direction. Pacing and repacing a room is, by the way, a very usual indication of a perturbed mind. I remember witnessing the case of a most wild and vindictive maniac in Bedlam, whose motions very much reminded me of those made by an infuriated animal, the walks of which are limited by the sides of his cage—these rapid strides and movements seem as if the individuals were desirous to throw off, as it were, an irritability which is greater than they can quietly endure. Those persons who are melancholic, rather than maniacally excited, have a particular fall in their shoulders, as they slowly pace the ground; the arms hanging down, as if almost detached from the shoulders; their movements, too, seem as if they were impelled, and even when they are frequent and long continued, there appears a reluctance in every step.

Some melancholics are obstinately fixed in a sitting posture, and confine themselves to one place for days, and weeks, and years together—never

moving but under compulsion. We have, at present, a patient at Peckham, (who, by the way, is at length promising a degree of convalescence, after many years of disorder,) who on no occasion, nor under any excitation, will walk even across the sitting-room, unless one of the attendants force him into it; although he has the power even of running, as I have seen him do, over a considerable extent of lawn.

It is astonishing with what integrity the animal functions are maintained in such cases of persevering and protracted suspension of exercise—and, indeed, the fact can only be explained upon the principle that the sentient disorder is a preservative against the more directly bodily ailment; one series of deranged actions thus preventing another, in a way afterwards to be noticed. In the case to which I have just adverted, there is manifestly a liver affection, and tendency to dropsy, which are, as it were, kept at bay by the clouded intellect. As this last becomes more developed and free, it is highly probable that the dropsical complaint will speedily be confirmed.

One prominent characteristic of derangement is an offensive breath, by which, it has been remarked, you may distinguish between real and feigned disorder. This symptom, it may be, in the general way, is too loosely taken as a proof of stomach affection, for the confirmed lunatic will eat, and drink, and digest with facility, at the time that the above accompaniment to deranged consciousness is most

conspicuous. The passions of the mind will immediately produce these changes in pulmonary exhalations, without disorder going through the course of the first passages.

The talkative lunatic is remarkable for the repetition of a word that may have been accidentally used by himself, or expressed by another; and such repetition is, for the most part, still more persisted in, despite of endeavours of bystanders to supersede it, should it fall into a sort of rhythm with other parts of a sentence. On the other hand, what has been called by Shakespeare re-wording, can seldom be accomplished by an individual whose ideas are jumbled together insanely. This difficulty in distinctly repeating a proposition, ought to be recollected by all who are professionally called on to decide mental conditions, as it is extremely significant of derangement. It was alluded to particularly, in a paper read before the College of Physicians, some time since, by the President.

Madmen are usually considered to be insensible to the lapse of time; past and to come being all resolved into present perception; and there is some correctness in the notion. What an affecting illustration of this *eternal now* of the maniac is that which Mr. Hill presents us with in his work on insanity.

“A gentleman on the point of marriage left his intended bride for a short time; he usually travelled in the stage coach to the place of her abode; the last journey he took from her was the last of his

life. Anxiously expecting his return, she went to meet the vehicle. An old friend announced to her the death of her lover. She uttered an involuntary scream, and piteous exclamation, 'he is dead!' From this fatal moment, *for fifty years*, has this unfortunate female daily, in all seasons, traversed the distance of a few miles, to the spot where she expected her future husband to alight from the coach, uttering in a plaintive tone, 'he is not come yet—I will return to-morrow.' "

In this particular, however, as in almost all others, there is much of irregularity and inconsistency. I shall most probably on this day be asked, by many of my Peckham patients, "Pray, Sir, when do you intend to let me out of this place? Here I have been confined for" so many years, and weeks, and days; and in comparing notes, I find their accounts correct. But some of these very patients in other things will show a want of proper perception of the lapse of time—manifesting the same inconsistency with a consumptive girl, who shall at one hour talk of shortly dying, and in the next will be ordering changes of dresses to meet the changes of fashion that have taken place during her protracted sickness.*

* The very condition of madness implies some sort of forgetfulness, or forgetfulness of some thing, which, were memory to recall, the hallucination would be over. Both in actual dreams, and in the day-dreams of madness, we bring together into one point of time, the most extravagant *alibis*, and join in conversation with those who have paid nature's great debt many years

An insensibility to cold, and heat, and disease, in their extremes, has been pronounced peculiar to insanity: but although in some cases the intensity of the predominating feeling makes the madman either careless of, or insensible to, other impressions, you will, for the most part, see lunatics crowd round the fire on winter days, exactly as would the inmates of other establishments. Cholera, too, swept several of our worst cases out of the world, and many were affected with influenza.

Again, some maniacs will refuse sustenance with obstinacy, while others will take it with avidity. Dr. Reid remarks that "Hypochondriasis has often to thank calamity for its cure." Certain it is, that Dyspepsia in many cases flies away from mania. I remember the case of an intimate friend and interesting patient, who for years previous to that extent of disorder which called for interference, was scarcely able to eat or drink any thing with impunity, afterwards took his meals, of whatever they might consist, without the smallest hesitation, and without the slightest stomach disturbance. It is probable, I think, in this instance, that had not madness succeeded dyspepsia, some organic de-

before. The portions of the brain implicated, if they tell us "nothing but the truth," but at the same time do not tell us the "whole truth," lead to all these misconceptions and mistakes as to time, and place, and circumstance. *How* they do this, and how they leave that undone, constitutes the great and still unsolved problem in mental philosophy.

rangement of the digestive organs might have done so instead ; and I have often thought, that had Napoleon been suffered to continue his career of ambition, madness might have visited him, rather than cancer of the pylorus.

You frequently find a roughness or rudeness of manner among the inmates of a mad-house, which strangely contrasts itself with other indications of opposite feeling. I remember, while standing in what we call our coffee-room, addressing a patient very courteously, and meeting from him such a disagreeable repulse as to create for the moment a disgust for the man ; a feeling, however, which I had occasion almost immediately to alter—for this very man, hearing me ask for a newspaper, directly hurried across the room, and presented me with one in a most gracious and kindly manner. This especial feature of madness ought to be had in constant recognition by those who have to manage the insane, inasmuch as it is of vital importance not to give way to dislikes, when it is the malady and not the man that occasions the dislike.

One of the most common of these apparent obstinacies is that of a fixed determination never, on any occasion, to speak ; and it is astonishing to what extent this determination is at times carried. Dr. Burrows tells us, that while incautiously standing too near a malignantly aspected patient in one of the hospitals in France, he received a kick from her, with the simultaneous exclamation, that he was an English blackguard, or some such offensive epithet.

Now it is remarkable, that this woman had been a long time under confinement, and neither the physicians, nor any of the attendants, even knew of what country she was, so inflexible had been her silence. It is possible, were this the place to theorize, that this female had conceived some disgust of her nation, and was determined to conceal the fact of her being British, till the motive of immediate vengeance on a British subject made her momentarily forget the determination.

There is a cunning, characteristic of madness, which often accompanies the most loquacious and apparently candid demeanour. Something, for the most part, lies concealed at the same time that the patient wishes you to suppose that he suppresses nothing; and when this secret something escapes them in part, from momentarily being off their guard, it is curious to observe what pains the deranged take to recall their half-confession. A patient was under my care for a very long time, whose intellect was partly deranged, on the score of having had an illegitimate child; and apprehending the circumstance might come to be known by his mother and sister, who were exceedingly rigid in their morals, and who, he had every reason to think, gave him credit for the same kind of restriction. During the whole time that he was my patient, this gentleman, although full of generalities as to crime, and delinquencies, and deserts of punishment, never once mentioned to me this particular circumstance.

It is curious that great talkativeness, in many

cases, succeeds to protracted silence. I have asked patients, sometimes, their motives for refusing to speak, and the answers I receive are various. In one instance I was struck with the affecting account a patient gave of his feelings. It seemed, he told me, "as if I could and could not, or as if I would and would not, in such a strange way, that though silence was the result of the conflict, I felt, in a manner, guilt connect itself with my silence." Well, indeed, may we exclaim with the mad Hamlet, while pondering over all these sad varieties of being, "What a piece of work is man!" But I must hasten on to the narration and discussion of other points.

CHAPTER IV.

SOURCES OF INSANITY.

IN this life there is no unmixed good. What are considered improvements in our nature and social habits, are necessarily accompanied by corresponding impediments to their being received as actual advancements in true felicity, the object aimed at in all our institutions and arrangements. We surely cannot pronounce the savage happier than the civilized individual; but we may go the length of an eloquent writer, and say, that as man emerges from the simplicity of his first estate, and comes forward into the regions of refinement, do “the furies of disease rush upon him, and would seem to scourge him back into the paths of nature and simplicity.”

That the sources and resources of refinement are, in a great measure, the sources of insanity, all theory and observation attest. Savages and children have intense feelings; they are actuated by mistaken motives, and pursue ruinous projects, and therefore may, in one sense, be deemed the subject of madness; but, wanting the complication of being; which social existence implies, there is not that

mischievous admixture of motive and counter-motive—not that restlessness in purpose and project—not that ambitious anticipation of prospective good, which, like the horizon, continues still at the same distance from the pursuer—and more than all, there is not that debility and deterioration of nervous energy which leads to lunacy, as bodies tend to the earth, and as water seeks its level.

It is, however, remarkable that those are greatly obnoxious to mental aberration, whom refinement would scarcely seem to reach. The poor are certainly more liable to mental aberration than would, *à priori*, be supposed; but, besides that, we have a fruitful cause of insanity among the lower classes immediately to be adverted to; the fact is partly attributable to the circumstance of their being, in some measure, within the reach of the evil, without the benefit of counteractives.

Although “the cook-maid grows nervous, and quotes Abernethy,” she is obliged to pursue her calling, despite of her sensitive organization; and these kitchen refinements bring with them, moreover, discontent and disrelish of particular modes of life. Nervousness and dyspepsia are thus increased by mental causes, and the borders of actual insanity are trodden upon by individuals, who ought not to be sensible that they have a stomach to be pampered, or nerves to be irritated.

Science may boast of her steam rapidity. Railway contrivances may come almost to annihilate the notion of time and distance. The arts of luxury

may pour out their enchantments, and philosophy and mercantile industry join to convey them to the remotest villages ; but even allowing that there is a benefit to society in all this, how certain and how great is its evil among the peasantry ! Were I to say that, even in my time, the countryman has been a much healthier and happier, because a more ignorant man, than he is at present, I might be called an enemy to improvement—a conservative of feudal barbarity. I feel, however, that the charge would be ill-founded ; and, beside, I am only required to state facts physiologically, and in reference to our present inquiry ; and most certain it is, that they infer too largely respecting the benefits of science—sometimes falsely so called—who calculate upon its unalloyed blessings. Dr. Willis used to say that he owed a great proportion of his patients to the importation of China tea into Britain. In this assertion he might be correct in one sense, but not in another. It is not the mere abstract poison of tea which deteriorates the nervous system,—though there is something even in this,—but it is the accompaniments which tea brings with it that do the greatest part of the mischief. Pianos, parasols, Edinburgh Reviews, and Paris-going desires, are now found among a class of persons who formerly thought these things belonged to a different race ; these are the true sources of nervousness and mental ailments, and not merely this or that specific article of food or drink.

It is a curious fact, and it being mentioned here

may serve to strengthen my assumption, that the multiplication of rules about diet and regimen brings with it an increase of the very evil that is so anxiously sought to be avoided. When did dyspepsia prevail so hugely as it does at this moment, when we have treatise upon treatise, and precept upon precept on stomach complaints. Who ever heard of such a numerous host of heart affections as now exist, now that the very vulgar talk largely and learnedly about valves and ventricles, and functions and organs ? Do not teeth disorders increase in number with the multiplication of dentists, even of science and principle ? and are not female complaints manifestly more numerous and complicated, now that there is an obstetrician in every street ?

That, then, the most sensitive parts of our bodies should become especially affected by refinement being pushed on too rapidly, or in a wrong direction, is in the due order of things ; and it behoves the guardians of physical and moral health,—for these two are intimately combined,—to look well to their doings, and to be assiduously careful that their interference may not do harm as well as good.

But to be more specific and particular in our enumeration of causes. No one, it may be mentioned in the first instance, who writes upon mental disorders passes by the subject of religion; and on this head I am disposed to think much of misapprehension has prevailed. It is easy to talk of “ the faction of faith ” peopling mad-houses ; it is no more difficult to condemn religion in a wholesale and

disqualified manner, than it is to call a man a methodist, because he is a little more under restriction than his neighbour ; but a subject of this serious and important nature demands something a little more systematic in its investigation than is implied by the derision of ribaldry, or the scoff of levity. “ Who,” says Dr. Paley, “ can refute a sneer?” and a sneer is certainly most ill-placed and ill-timed, when employed on a topic “ in which the wisest of mankind would rejoice to find an answer to their doubts, and rest to their inquiries.”

Mixed, however, as it often is with a great deal that is objectionable, we must at the same time admit that there is much of correctness in that assumption which regards religion as an occasional source of mental disorder. When treating on the subject of preventives, I shall extract from Dr. Burrows a most interesting narrative, bearing upon the great and almost irreparable injury done to mental health and moral happiness, by permitting false and gloomy notions of futurity to mix themselves with the feelings of early youth—nay, in some instances, by the parents or guardians of childhood becoming, from the most conscientious motives, and with the best designs, the instruments of forcing these habits of thought and principles of faith upon the unformed minds of very young children. This narrative proved probably to me particularly interesting, at least more so than it will be to many others, inasmuch as I was myself the subject of the same sort of training, and because, like the subject

of the story, I evinced a disposition, from the earliest development of mind, to receive dogmas, which, when once they are permitted to become "part and parcel of reflection and belief," give a complexion and colouring to after-life feelings, that are not entirely shaken off with change of sentiment and conviction. Let parents, anxious for the welfare of their children, read and ponder upon the narrative now referred to.

It is a curious fact, as stated by Dr. Hallaran, that among the many instances he meets with of victims to insanity, he finds Catholics by far the least common, and this circumstance is explained by the Romish religion, more than any other, connecting something of immorality and unholy daring with even the wish to enquire into the evidences of faith. As a medical writer, I have only to do with facts, and the truth is, that insanity most usually makes its inroads during the transition from one belief to another—it is, as above intimated, most anxiously desired by those interested in the preservation of the Roman faith, to stand in the way of such transition: and, although I would no more be inclined to infer from the immunity of its disciples any thing in favour of superstition, than I would against science, because the farmer's daughter, who now knows 'the use of the globes,' is not more happy than in her former state of village seclusion and limited acquirement; I must still insist that sensitive minds, in their search after truth, and in their convictions of falling short of those feelings

which that supposed truth enjoins, are thereby made exceedingly liable to mental aberration of the most marked and melancholy nature.

But if false persuasion and defective education are calculated to cause mental disquietude, the undue use of spirituous liquors is still more abundantly mischievous in its effect upon "mind, body, and estate." Every gin-shop is a sort of half-way-house between sanity and madness; and it is into these dreadful haunts, beyond all other places and circumstances, that we are to seek for the explication of pauper insanity. Tea! why, persons might drink this from morning till night with comparative impunity, did it not lead to the substitution of vapid for substantial sustenance, and to that sinking, as it is vulgarly but expressively called, in the stomach, which impels the sufferer from it to seek a temporary remedy in a material which cannot fail of being ultimately and extensively detrimental.

I am so impressed with the importance of caution against the first steps into the fearful paths of spirit-drinking, that I have in a manner transferred this source of disorder from its place of physical to that of moral, or more properly, of demoralizing agency. If I find I have space, I shall take up the subject again under another division of my treatise; I shall here merely add, that were it only that the drunkard loses his self-respect by the habit he has given in to, *that* were the loss of every thing that can make existence valuable or available to any

good purpose ;* and certainly the loss is deeply to be deplored of that preventive power which we all more or less possess, if not thus deprived of it, of checking the first shewings of mental gloom—or as a pointed writer has it, of “shaking the burden of hypochondriacism from our shoulders”—and thus destroying in its germ the menaced growth. “Throw but a stone, the giant dies,” says another epigrammatic author ; but who shall be capable of hurling the stone against the approaching Goliah of madness, with arms paralysed by spirituous potation, or hearts sunk down under the consciousness of self-inflicted woe !†

* Among pauper lunatics we find many that have been prostitutes. In this condition of life the self-respect above spoken of cannot fail of being vanquished : the poor victims of seduction, half animal, but with so much of the human left as to make them miserable, from a sense of degradation into animal being, gradually, and often not very gradually, lose what of rational is left to them, by resorting to the gin-shop, and the consequence—the finale—is a madhouse.

+ A melancholy instance has recently occurred within my own observation, of the dreadful consequences that may ensue from permitting the practice of spirit-drinking to grow upon us insensibly. A lady of the most refined feelings and restricted habits, and who, when I was first acquainted with her, would have refused a glass of spirits as she would have avoided poison and crime, lost her immediate relations, became deaf, and on this last account secluded herself from social intercourse, of which indeed she could not partake. Boarding in a family with whom she had not two ideas in common, she retreated as much as possible to her sitting-room. Here she became subject to vaporous depressions and stomach-sinkings, for which she had, at first, cautious recourse to cordials. But she found it neces-

Opium-taking is another practice which ought to be most assiduously shunned. This, among the higher orders, obtains to a much greater extent than is usually thought. Many of our fashionables could not pass through a “winter in London” without the aid of this potent and fashionable drug. But at what dreadful expense is the power purchased? and after all, what a miserable purchase is made!

A great deal of mere verbiage has been expended upon the question whether madness be hereditary? It might as well be asked, is constitution hereditary? At the same time much of unnecessary alarm has often been taken at the prospect of matrimonial unions, in reference to hereditary taint; and it would, perhaps, in the long run, be more conducive to general weal, to let things of this kind be directed in the course that inclination leads to, affection counsels, or convenience dictates.

It has been generally assumed, that insanity is more common in England than elsewhere; but a census, taken from the time that the continent has been shaken by political and religious commotions, while we have been in comparative tranquillity, tells a different tale. The French Revolution, while it overthrew one monarch, created many. “Nay, the madhouses of France at this time were peopled

sary to increase them; she did so—and eventually to the extent of falling on the floor from intoxication. The loss of self-esteem was the consequence—she went on increasing her doses, till death put an end to the tremendous tragedy.

with gods as well as kings. Three Louis XVI.'s were seen together disputing one another's pretensions. There were, besides, several Kings of Corsica and other countries ; there were sovereigns of the world, a Jesus Christ, a Mahomet, so many deities as to render it necessary to distinguish them by the place they came from, as the god of Lyons, the god of the Gironde." And it is a curious fact, not adduced in favour of arbitrary governments and feudal habits, any more than former positions were intended to lessen the value of science, or advocate slavish religion—it is a curious fact, I say that since France has been in possession of a larger share of liberty, it has been more visited by insanity. With us, however, there still continue causes, physical and moral, enough to render mental disorder frequent. Spirit-drinking is the vice of England. Our clouds and our storms oppress our comparatively inelastic feelings. The stock-exchange and city excitement still exist, notwithstanding the comparative depression of our mercantile interest ; and, according to an author just quoted, "there are circumstances in our literature which have an evident tendency to fix the imagination at the time when it is most open to impressions upon mental derangement." SHAKESPEARE, a name that always recalls to his intelligent readers the first of poets and the most penetrating of observers, has succeeded, by his happy use of madness as machinery, in carrying terror and compassion to a height, which they cannot perhaps be made to reach by any other means.

His desponding mad Ophelia, his raving mad Lear, his jealous mad Othello, his melancholy Jacques, his crafty mad Hamlet, awe and attach, on the first exhibition, and bind the heart in a never-ceasing spell."

It may, however, admit of a question, whether Dr. Beddoes does not, in some measure, place consequence here in the light of cause. Is it not because we are constitutionally disposed to a splice of melancholy, that we dwell with such enthusiastic and ceaseless delight upon these almost superhuman delineations of the master poet of all nations and of all times; rather than that the perusal and reperusal of them creates melancholy? or perhaps there is a mutual mixture of cause and consequence—of national pride and national melancholy, which disposes us to the relish of Shakespeare's merits, with an intensity that almost equals their deserts. In France, Shakespeare would have scarcely been placed at the head of even their own poets. In Germany, had Germany been his native clime, his merits would have been appreciated as they are with us. But this is not the place for philology and criticism.

Intense study has been ranged among the sources of insanity—and with propriety. Without being desirous of checking the youthful aspirant after college honours, I cannot but admit, that when "hard reading" is carried beyond the physical powers, it is, like the *Vis consili expers* of the poet,

calculated to destroy its own design. What would some of our pale-faced voluptuaries in study say to the advice of a lady, who, when writing to her son at the university, tells him "he must eat and drink like a ploughman, or he will do no good with his books?" Certain it is, that if we do not walk, and eat, and sleep well, while at college, we gain our honours at a dear rate, and shall hold them upon an insecure tenure.

To say that disappointed love is a source of mental wandering, is to say what thousands have already said; but there are circumstances connected with sexual passions and feelings, which I am almost afraid to touch upon, lest I trespass on that delicacy, which all writers and teachers ought to be careful of preserving. When I allude to such instances as that of the celebrated Swift, and of that strange mixture of platonic and sensual attachment, which all his intercourse with the other sex manifested, and when I refer to the confessions of Rousseau which touch upon these points, some of my readers will be at no loss to guess at the bearing of my present intimation. Dr. Darwin tells us, that within his own observation two youths committed suicide, leaving behind them some such reason for the act as this; "I am impotent, and therefore not fit to live;" and it has been my fate to be consulted several times by individuals who have been driven almost to despair by this unfounded apprehension of incompetency to fulfil the duties of the married

state. Imaginary impotence is, indeed, one of the most fruitful sources of mental perturbation, that we meet with in civilized society.

Dr. Beddoes, in his allusion to the affecting particulars of Swift's case, takes, in my judgment, an erroneous view of the subject, for he refers the condition of this extraordinary individual to that weakness which is induced by the indulgence, when young, in solitary and unlawful habits. But to me it appears, that the disordered condition of mind, and its dreadful results, were connected with actual power, while the individual could not bring himself, with all his endeavours and reasonings, to the consciousness of potency. Indeed, the more that the reason is called out in these deplorable cases, the more the imaginary disorder appears to the sufferers in the light of reality, and they must often be cheated into persuasion, or rather the proof of manhood, by contrivances on the part of their medical advisers—an instance of which, I shall have to refer to hereafter.

That the vice to which allusion has just been made does, however, so deteriorate the nervous energy as to bring actual insanity in its train of evils, is not to be questioned. Whether the singular but most powerful writer just alluded to, be right in his opinions as to the most effective method of checking this dire evil, it will be more in place afterwards to discuss. As things at present stand, we may join a French author of reputation, who remarks, “*La masturbation, ce fleau de l'espèce*

humaine, est plus souvent qu'on ne pense, cause de folie, surtout chez les riches."

But the rich are now happily improving, both in their moral and physical habits, and mankind is becoming sufficiently *Simonean* to feel that each and every one who is born into the world, brings with that birth a responsibility to employ his powers otherwise than in mere gratification of lust.

In bringing to a close what we had to advance in the present section on the head of mental causes of madness, we may state that all the passions, if suffered to work without restraint, or in suddenly rushing upon the mind, are calculated to have an injurious effect upon the intellect. It is a curious fact, that a large quantity, so to speak, of joy, will, like an overdose of physical stimulus, so powerfully excite, as to occasion a wreck of the understanding, without the first effects having existed so long as to have become visible. In the South Sea speculation, which made so much noise some years since, those who were abundantly successful were those who most suffered; and such is the general law in cases of this kind. We lost a poor benevolent lunatic by cholera, from Peckham, who was driven to madness by hearing that a certain reward of industry and sobriety, which consisted of a weekly allowance, was adjudged to him; and the joy and gratitude which this intelligence produced, caused the immediate and permanent loss of his intellect. In all this lunatic's deportment there

was a remarkable kindness and benevolence manifested, and if ever the organ of benevolence was more conspicuous in the cerebral organization of one over the many, it was in the instance of the poor fellow to whom I now refer.

“Envy, hatred, malice,” and all other malignant passions, as sources of madness, scarcely need be touched upon; indeed, the intellect is half gone, before the individual can be brought to the indulgence of these corroding excitations. I am not a disciple of Owen. I verily think that life without passion were a sorry existence indeed—a Chinese landscape, without proportion or perspective, light or shadows; but I am enthusiast enough to suppose that a gradual improvement is coming to be effected upon society at large, by a growing conviction that to envy, and hate, and destroy our fellow men, is not only unchristian, but unmeaning.

Of physical causes producing madness, some are more evident lesions of the brain—some less so. They need not be enumerated. Of the external sources from physical agency, phases in the moon have been considered influential, but after much enquiry and observation directed to this point, I have not been able to ascertain that such is the case. *Lunacy*, I should say, is, on all accounts, an ill-judged synonym for madness. I do not, however, entertain the smallest doubt respecting the influence and agency of atmospheric changes upon the disordered understanding. So well is this fact made

out to my mind, that I am often able to predict, with accuracy, what will be the general condition of our Peckham inmates, in respect of perturbation and excitement, before I enter the house.

This effect of atmospheric change is very easy of conception; and it is perhaps more to these aerial mutations than to any other cause, that we may trace the nervousness and gloom which are said to be endemic in Britain. Only think what an alteration in the nervous state, and consequently what a change of feeling, must follow a large draught of positive electricity from our bodies in order to supply the sudden subtraction of it from the atmosphere—then again, the sudden alteration of an opposite kind, and its consequent alteration of brain and nervous energy. For myself I can say, that the barometer never either falls or rises suddenly, without my becoming sensible of the induced change. The domesticated animals of our fields and our houses, who, like the inmates of a madhouse, give unrestrained sway to their impulses and feelings, are, it is well known, in their actions and appearances, so many living weather-glasses; and I am disposed to think, that should medicine ever receive any principle of improvement beyond its present condition, it will be found in the relations the electricity of the air holds to the electricity of animate bodies. There are no analogies which may be proposed, at all explanatory of vital movements with matter destitute of organization; but if any comparison

can be made between things essentially and eternally different, it is that of nervous excitation and electric impulse: a beautiful proof of which is given by Dr. Wilson Phillip, in making a galvanic stream supply the office of nervous branches from the brain.

CHAPTER V.

PATHOLOGICAL CONDITIONS, OR PROXIMATE CAUSES.

IF I am called to an individual who is raving with maniacal fury, uttering expressions and manifesting feelings which unequivocally entitle him to be considered mad, I am induced, of course, to aim at ascertaining what precise alteration has taken place in structure to have occasioned all this dreadful change in function. But until more and better information be obtained of the intimate workings of the nervous texture—until we are better informed as to the precise bearing of the brain, in mass or in parts, upon intellectual being—until, in a word, we know more than is at present known of the connexion of structure and function, our pathological investigation will often prove conspicuously fallacious, and our knowledge of what, in the language of the schools, is named the proximate cause of the complaint, will prove at best but negative and partial.

Phrenology, if found upon further enquiry to be correct in all its applications, would go a considerable way towards explaining that irregularity of thought and act now supposed; but even were this doc-

trine admitted in all its required latitude, much would still remain inexplicable as to the mode and manner in which the phenomena of madness are produced. The organ of high-mindedness we will suppose to be at work—but what is the kind of change effected throughout its mass? If you answer it is excited, still the question recurs, what is the physical condition by which this excitation is constituted? We know that both brain and nerve are susceptible of the greatest change without any primary alteration, at least of an appreciable or discoverable extent, in the vascular part of our organization, and I hold that the phrenologist is in error, even upon his own principles, if he assume the excitement of an organ to be an inflammation of that organ.

The rapid transition from one state to another, by which mania, as before remarked, is characterized, quite sets at naught all explanation of living circumstance, drawn from analogy with any other principles in nature, and even when during our more tranquil or less disorderly conditions of perception and conception, a thought is transmitted from “Indus to the Pole,” while it is presumable, nay, certain, that something occurs in some part or another, or perhaps in every part of the sentient system, before such thought is generated and transported, of what that something is, we are quite as ignorant as the babe unborn.

It is easy to say that the brain is affected through the medium of the liver, and in this spirit to de-

nominate disorder melancholia ; it is an indulgence in indolence to talk of the “digestive organs” originating all nervous malady, and then to sit down content under the persuasion we have arrived at a principle ; for even admitting the rectitude of the data, and that is going too far, for in thus doing, we often put down cause upon the score where we ought to have marked effect—we get rather at the knowledge of predisposing conditions than proximate sources ; and we further see, that blood shall be conveyed in too large or too small a measure through the portal vein ; the biliary secretion shall now flow freely and orderly through its appropriate conduits ; now be sent into the stomach, because it is either formed in too large a quantity, or finds a difficult transmission through its ducts. The organ itself that secretes the bile shall become enormously large, or shrivelled into comparative nothingness. Tubera or tubercle may pervade the entire of its structure ; granulated bodies may come to take place of due and proper texture ; it may be hardened or softened throughout ; almost all changes of colour may take place in it, adhesions may be formed to its investing membranes ; the gall-bladder attached to it may be stuffed with concretions ; and several other circumstances of morbid change have place, without the mental conditions being implicated to any thing like a corresponding extent ; while at other times the smallest departure from integrity, either in structure of function, nay, the mere passage of a little acrimonious bile through

the bowels, will produce lowness of spirits, dejection of mind, and, in a word, cause the individual to think, and feel, and conceive, and act very differently from what would otherwise be the case.

These visceral conditions, indeed, when they are present, for the most part give a melancholic rather than a maniacal character to the complaint; and we ought, in the first place, to ascertain whether what by the divisionists is termed mania, may admit of something more precise in the way of explication, or in the ascription of accompanying condition, than is applied in the terminology of "excitement."

That mania is not inflammation of the brain, necessarily or originally, all fact, and all pathology, and all practice, when it is properly instituted, goes to prove. It is, in the first place, destitute of those febrile conditions which inflammatory disorder ever more or less engenders. Delirium *without* fever is indeed one of the definitions of nervous, as differing from other delirium. The pulse by no means marks out an inflammatory diathesis, for although it may be increased in celerity, and even that is not invariably the case, there is a freedom from the hard vibratory feel which denotes true inflammation; the blood drawn, and often very improperly drawn, from a furious maniac, is not seldom, even under all this perturbation of the frame, destitute of those characteristics which indicate vascular excitement; instead of being full of fibrine or coagulable lymph, which soon separates from the other constituents of the blood, when inflammation is present, it is often more than com-

monly tenuous, and preserves its uniform state for a considerable period.

Mania in very many cases occurs abruptly—is changed into other states suddenly—nay, disappears altogether in a manner quite inconsistent with the notion of inflammation having been its essence: and, lastly, it may be said that measures which would be properly instituted for its subduction, were inflammation its source, are often much worse than useless when employed to calm the sort of excitement now under notice.

I shall probably be told that inflammation may establish itself in the membranous texture that envelopes the brain and the nerves, and thus occasion deranged thought and feeling, even when the inflammatory symptoms are not so prominent as they are under circumstances of serous and other membranes being implicated in disorder; but I still maintain, that were inflammation necessary to excitement, *that* excitement could not be so suddenly induced, so instantaneously crushed, or so speedily pass into an opposite state, as does the excitement of mania.

I am instructed by my phrenological friends, in all cases of aberrated sense, to pass my hand carefully over the whole of the head, and try to find whether one part is hotter than others: I often do so, and without ascertaining any variation of temperature; but not discovering such variation I would hold to be no proof that one part of the brain might not be excited more than another, since excitation, as I have said, is by no means necessarily inflammatory; and since,

if it were, it might not be thus externally manifest, for the brain and the cranium are supplied by different branches of blood-vessels, and the irritation of one would not necessarily pass on to the other.

I shall immediately state, when noticing *post mortem* appearances, that the phrenologist points out portions of the skull thinner than the general order of things, and attributes this tenuity to the workings of the excited organ underneath coming at length to engage the substance itself of the skull; all this may, and does occasionally occur, but here it is presumable that the structural changes are secondary, and that the cerebral excitement had existed prior to their induction. Indeed, were inflammation a previous condition of, or an indispensable concomitant with excitement, we should all of us daily, and more especially nightly, be the subjects of inflammation; every vivid impression that might be made upon our feelings—every time that conception mounted up to the height of supposed reality—every time we perceived or felt beyond the ordinary tenor of perception—every imagination, and every *dream* would be nothing less than inflammation; and it may be added, that the phrenologist would even then stultify his own doctrines, were he to pronounce upon the nature and degree of hallucination from exterior form, because, although the fulness of this or that organ might imply that mental manifestation had been according to it in kind, yet after a time this very fulness, were it the result of inflammation, would, like the consequences of inflammation in other parts, be in a degree destruc-

tion of the brain integrity—and a thickened mass of any thing but brain be formed, it being constituted of those depositions, and infarctions, and almost inorganic states which inflammation cannot fail of speedily producing.

Whether, then, we judge phrenologically or not, on the pathology of maniacal fury—in either case I contend that those take erroneous views of nervous and cerebral, who believe them to be of necessity inflammatory excitements; and when discussing the treatment of madness, we shall see that mal-practice, as well as bad theory, results from the want of distinction now referred to.

There is one species of morbid excitement which goes under the name of *Delirium Tremens*; here we often find the furious condition preserved, even up to a very short time previous to death; and here, as we shall afterwards state, large doses of opium seem to prove almost the only satisfactory medicines with which we are acquainted. Now every one knows, who knows any thing of the action of medicine, that opium has so remarkable a tendency to fill the vessels of the brain, as to endanger the induction of inflammation, even where it may be necessary to administer it. Here, then, we have most manifestly morbid excitement carried up to a very high pitch, and yet that medicine, which in inflammation is objectionable, proves so potent in bringing it down. Does not this fact go to prove, that at any rate we may have the most marked mania without vascular change, and that Dr. Willis is right in his endeavours to check

that *mania* for lowering, which some of our pathologists and prescribers show themselves addicted to.*

But these doctrines and practices will fall again before us for animadversion, and we must proceed to the further consideration of proximate causes.

In what is considered the low state, as opposed to maniacal flights, and which flights, by the way, often descend to lowness with the greatest rapidity, a morbid state of the liver and its functions is not, as above intimated, unfrequently met with, either as cause or consequence. Respecting the action of this viscus, as well as that of the kidneys, much information is wanting: I mean their actions in reference to their bearings on the animal economy, whether in a disordered or sound condition; it may be, that some states of brain and nerve derangement may grow out of, or at least have some alliance with a want of due quantity or quality in the blood that passes through the *vena-porta*; and in consequence a deficient transmission of venous blood may occasion a retention in the system of what nature designed to be excreted. Or an irregularity in the blood's distribution through the brain may interfere with the cerebral functions; and thus the derangement in bile secretion may be either cause or consequence of brain disorder.

* There is one very important principle which ought to be taken into account, when we are endeavouring to form an accurate judgment respecting the nature of excitement, viz.—that the excitation itself is for the most part rather negative, or relative than positive; or that the perturbation of one organ is owing to the morbid quietude or impediment to action in another.

Were the blood's irregularity the sole source or consequence of encephalic disturbance, we might suppose that obstructions to the free circulation through other viscera would induce, in like manner, mental depressions and excitement; this does not appear, however, to be precisely the case, and it must be taken into account, that low, and desponding, and irritable feelings are, when far under the grade of what would be called madness, a very general result from the biliary secretion flowing through the blood-vessels, which, in the natural course of things, would pass through the bowels.

It is common to use the combined phrase, "biliary and melancholy," and the very term melancholia implies a depravation in the quality of the bile. In all these affairs there is, however, a great deal of vagueness, both in *œtiology* and *nomenclature*, a great deal of difficulty in ascertaining the prime link in the chain of disordered state, and a great deal of obscurity founded on the circumstance, that what would or ought in seeming to produce certain kinds and states of disorder, frequently to our apprehension exists in all its fulness, without disorder being induced.

The term *sympathy* is employed often in medicine to express a fact, when we are entirely at sea as to the cause of it. Here the malady seems brought about by a sort of transfer of nervous condition, without the vascular organization being at all called upon. In some of these instances the utmost difficulty not seldom attends our endeavours to

ascertain which organ or part was the first to be engaged with disease. When the uterine system is affected in alternation with brain disorder, or in conjunction with it, as in the distressing cases of puerperal madness and nymphomania, we often find it any thing but easy to say whether the encephalic organ or part of it were in such an irritable condition as to require only the common uterine actions to set it going wrong, or whether the more than ordinary irritation of the part and parts referred to may not have been the prime agent in the morbid process. In occurrences of this kind the term sympathy only divides, it does not untie the string, even although we borrow from Dr. Darwin the word reverse as well as direct sympathy,

When there is reason to believe any action beyond the interchange of nervous impulse, I have been inclined to think that the absorbent power is much employed in the processes of transmission. The temperament of the affected individual seems frequently to favour this presumption ;* but more especially those curious phenomena which no person

* In another publication I have stated, that if one temperament more than other appears to give a tendency to cerebral disorder, it is that in which the lymphatic in connection with nervous is most prevalent. I am, however, too disinclined to lay much stress upon systematic views that may be the result of hastily generalizing ; for I have seen too much, both in theory and practice, that is objectionable on this score. In another section, when considering the utility of Digitalis, I intend slightly to allude to, although by no means insist upon, the principle now hinted at in connection with the effects of the above-mentioned medicinal.

can long practise medicine without witnessing. I allude to the actual transfer of locality, as in cases where dropsy of the chest makes way for the immediate occurrence of disorder of the brain, when hydrocephalus disappears, and a large discharge of urine marks that disappearance, and when gouty affections of the stomach are succeeded by gouty inflammation of the feet; this again being superseded and followed by decided disorder of the head. Even, indeed, where actual disorganization had taken place, of such nature as that you might infer nothing could arrest its further progress excepting death, it is occasionally seen that the establishment of a vicarious malady in another part will suspend the original distemper. The following narrative of melancholy intercst I was accustomed to refer to in my lectures, as a remarkable conformation of the principle. The case is from that beautiful piece of latinity, inferior only to Celsus, entitled, "Monita et Precepta Medica," by Dr. Mead.

"A young lady, about eighteen years of age, was attacked with a spitting of blood and a cough, which, although active treatment was pursued, was soon succeeded by night perspirations, fever, and every symptom indicative of a rapid, and menacing a confirmed consumption. Death, indeed, stared her frightfully in the face. The anticipation of the event struck the patient with fear, and she became infuriate in consequence of some ecclesiastic visitors painting, in vivid colours, the horrors of eternity. Mania was the consequence. In the mean time

her bodily condition began to amend, the fever and sweat subsided, the spitting was arrested, and every thing promised a complete recovery. From a condition of high mental agitation she now fell into melancholy, and this was, in the course of a short time, succeeded by calmness and composure of mind ; but, alas ! with the return of her reason her bodily complaint likewise returned, and this fine young creature shortly died of actual consumption of the lungs,—*postquam tres menses, fere sunt elapsi febre hectica cum pulmonis exulceratione reversa, tabe confecta preiit meliori fato, ut visa est, digna puella.*"

That the absorbing agency is occasionally summoned to act in these vicarious affections, observation makes sufficiently evident ; in these cases we suppose also altered or increased action in the secretion, and exhalant organization to correspond with it. Who has not noticed how remarkably the secretions are affected by the state of the spirits and passions of the mind ? Witness the cold sweats of the fearful, the suddenly secreted and large flow of urine in hysterics, the immediate changes occasioned on the skin and hair by the receipt of mournful intelligence, the absorption of tumours from the fear of operation ; these and very many other similar effects are familiar to all who practise medicine, and they tend to shew that the alternation and transfer of states and circumstances are often produced, in a way not easily explained, except by supposing the intervention of the absorbent process.

Remarkable interchanges often, it must be admitted, occur, when there does not appear reason to suppose the organs of exhalation and absorption to be in any way implicated. Who shall explain, upon principles at all recognizable as legitimate, the circumstance of latent and unconscious knowledge lying in the brain, as it were, and only called out by accidental or adventitious circumstance? I remember, when a student at St. Thomas's Hospital, the case of a man who came from Gibraltar, supposed to be deaf, either from inattention or ignorance on the part of the surgeons who examined him. This man, it was ascertained, was labouring under compressed brain, in consequence, it is supposed, of a fall. Mr. Cline performed the operation of lifting up the part of bone which was thus by its pressure interfering with brain function, or with its manifestation rather, and the moment the pressure was removed, the poor man began talking Welch, a language which he knew when a boy, but which he had forgotten in after years; and we occasionally hear of cases very similar. The much talked of phenomenon of "light before death" is derided by some, but the derision is misplaced, and when, I have elsewhere said, it is exultingly asked by the sceptic respecting a paralyzed individual, where is the immortal mind which was wont to animate the features and guide the conduct of this man, now reduced to a state of mere animal vitality? we might appeal to instances, and they are not few, in which, just prior to the period of a total extinc-

tion of the living principle, the soul seems to come out from its hiding-place, and to cast a parting glance at the surrounding scene, as the sun often sinks bright and glorious below the horizon after having been the whole of the day obscured by clouds. Who has not dwelt with agonizing delight on the transcendantly beautiful representation of Mrs. Opie, in her inimitable work, entitled, "Father and Daughter," where she makes the return of reason in the distracted parent the signal that all is about to close with him, so far as this world is concerned? and the delineation is no less true to nature than it is impressive and affecting. Something of the same kind happened in the case my own father, who had been unconscious for years; and my respected friend and late colleague, Dr. Hancock, related once to me the account of a most respectable individual, belonging to the Society of Friends, who had been for a very long time deprived of his faculties by a stroke of palsy; nay, to use Dr. H.'s own words, who had been for this lengthened period in a state of drivelling idiotcy, but who, for some time previous to his death, was restored to the full possession of his rational powers; he summoned his astonished family around him, delivered to each of them his parting advice and benediction, and then calmly resigned himself to a peaceful death!

But, probably, one of the most curious instances on record, illustrating this latency, or, as it were,

locked-up condition of mental power, by certain conditions of the body, is that which, but for the respectability of the narrator, would scarcely gain credit. I extract it from the Edinburgh Review.

“A young woman,” says Mr. Tuke, “who was employed as a domestic servant, by the father of the relater, when he was a boy, became insane, and at length sunk into a state of perfect idiotcy. In this condition she remained for many years, when she was attacked by typhus fever; and my friend having then practised medicine for some time, attended her. He was surprised to observe, as the fever advanced, a development of mental powers. During that period when others were delirious, this patient was entirely rational. She recognized in the face of her medical attendant the son of her old master, whom she had known so many years before, and she related many circumstances respecting his family, and others which had happened to herself in her earlier days. But, alas! it was only the gleam of reason. As the fever abated clouds again enveloped her mind; she sunk into her former deplorable state, and remained in it till her death, which happened a few years afterwards.”

It must be conceded that these varied mutations do not assist us much in our pathological views, even where the absorbent energy seems rather more manifestly than at other times to be called into exercise. Under our present knowledge of structure and function, we cannot say how these bodily

conditions come to influence mental power, nor how mental affection, on the other hand, removes “mountains of disease.”

A philosophical physician will, however, aim at picking out practical information from these phenomena; and one inference is plain enough from the whole, viz.—that he who rests upon drugs and draughts alone for the cure of disorder, whether he be a minute homoipathist, a sweeping Brunonian, a Boerrhavean humourist, or a determined empiric, will find himself miserably out in his calculations of efficacy.

It may properly be made a question, how spirituous liquors operate when they, as it were, transmit their influence more directly upon the nervous power, and bring about first aberration, and then imbecility of mind? That the immediate influence of these stimulants is upon the sentient organs, is, perhaps, evident, from their immediately exciting manifestations; but it is not absolutely clear that even this direct excitation is confined to the brain and nerves, for the secretions become very shortly implicated, as shown by the exhalations; and if there be any dependence upon the following story, there is likely to be, in some way or other, a rapid transition not only of influence, but even of material, through the circulating, and absorbing, and exhaling vessels. A man fell down dead immediately upon taking into his stomach an enormous quantity of gin; his body was examined, and in the ventricles of the brain was found a quantity of fluid having the

smell and taste of gin. This narrative may imply a little departure from truth; but, at any rate, there are sufficient circumstances, and those of constant occurrence, which prove that there is much more going on in an organized and animated body than physiology "has yet dreamt of."

When "the ingurgitation of spirituous potation," as Dr. Darwin calls it, produces its mischief upon the sentient organs gradually and remotely, it may be, in part, by setting up a slow inflammation upon the villous coat of the stomach and bowels, and thus inducing, as one of its main sequences, a chronic dyspepsy. Large drinkers are proverbially little eaters; and this is, in a great part, owing to the mischief done by alcohol to the membrane of the stomach, which, when in a hale condition, pours out the gastric juice. Want of appetite occasions too little ingesta for the formation of blood; the brain receives injury from this source; and thus an asthenic condition of its functional capacity is engendered.

I may here just advert to the disputes of systematics respecting the sthenic or asthenic nature of insanity generally; some practical discrepancy having arisen out of the pathological views taken by physicians in reference to this particular. The fact is, that as well in this as in all other parts of medical science, doctrines are conceived too much in the abstract; and mania, and melancholia or by whatever other terms designators choose to mark out unnatural working in the brain, are as much depen-

dent, nay, much more so, upon the kind of constitution implicated, and the measure of original strength or weakness, than they are upon any positive or specific differences in their own particular showings. Of this, however, I feel certain, that Dr. Willis, in checking the tendency of some practitioners to regard every excitation as a mark or indication of power, has done much towards opening out just views on the subject of madness; for it is an important and practical truth, that although the maniacal, and even the melancholic state, demands occasionally loss of blood, depletion will often add to irritation, when a tonic plan would be followed with success. On this point I again refer to what will afterwards be advanced more appropriately; the remark in reference to practice being merely for the purpose of harmonizing theory, and of showing that neither our lancet on the one hand, nor our quinine on the other, is likely to be available in the subduction of excitement, unless we take for our practical guidance something much less fallacious than the notion of excitement proving power.

It might be imagined that examinations of the brain, and the spine, and the viscera, after death, would materially assist our investigation of proximate causes; but although scarcely any individual dies after mental disease of long-standing, without some change being manifestly produced in the brain, or its appendages, there are, unfortunately, two hindrances against these changes being, in our present state of knowledge, very greatly available to-

wards the required purpose. In the first place, the alterations themselves are exceedingly wanting in correspondence with what one should, *a priori*, conceive; and in the next, it is not always easy to say how far appearances, after death, have been cause of disease, or consequence of disease, or consequence of death itself. One, and almost the only uniform mark that I have myself been able to discover, is that cloudy sort of deposit over the whole surface of the brain, under its investments, and as if produced by slow membranous inflammation, which inflammation itself had probably been occasioned by the protraction of morbid excitement.* I remember one patient dying, the constant burden of whose song was, "I have got a mopsey popsey head—there is something in it which could I but extract, I should be well :" and he, to the last, made various attempts to gain possession of instruments by which (for there is nothing too absurd for insanity to conceive) he imagined he could get at this something and take it out himself. We shall surely find altered structure here, I said to my colleagues, that will give us a little insight respecting the immediate source of hallucination. My prediction, however, was not verified; for after searching minutely, both upon the surface and into the interior of the

* A thickness and hardness of the dura mater has been said by some to be a very general appearance; and we do often find this membranous change; but in my observation, it is by no means so uniform as the milky deposit above spoken of under the membranes.

encephalon, nothing was detectible beyond the appearance just noticed.

No one who has seen much of practice, or is at all versed in medical writings, will deny that organic lœsions of the most palpable kind are occasionally found upon inspection; besides those already noticed as the most common, turgidity of vessels, and effusion into the ventricles, are perhaps next in frequency; there are often also bloody spots and streaks in different parts of the brain's substance—the pineal gland is occasionally, not indeed unsfrequently, changed from its usual appearance, the plexus choroides is sometimes more than naturally large, and its vessels more than ordinarily distended; at other times so small, as almost to have disappeared: the substance of the brain is now preternaturally soft—now more than usually hard, the carotid vessels are occasionally distended, as if the brain had been for a long time calling for more than its accustomed supply—there are very commonly seen adhesions between the duramater and the interior of the cranium—spicula of bone sometimes protrude into the brain from the skull, and, in this case, the subject of the disorder is for the most part an epileptic—apoplectic cysts are seen when the malady shall have been the sequence of apoplexy with hœmorrhage; but this is not so common, because hœmorrhagic apoplexy is for the most part followed by paralysis, and this paralysis seems to stand in place of insanity. All these I say, and very many other appearances, present themselves upon *post mortem* inquisition, but not with any thing like

such regularity as that you could stand in the yard of a lunatic asylum and predict, with any thing like even an approach to certainty, that in this patient we should find this kind of alteration in the brain—in that another kind.

Phrenological researches, with this object in view, that is, with the object of connecting *læsion* of perception and consciousness with *læsion* in the brain, may probably come to be more explanatory than our modes of examination hitherto adopted. In respect to general form, appearances, must be almost the same interiorly as before the cranium had been taken from the brain; I have already intimated, however, that organic change, as the result of inflammation, must be rather the index of lessened than increased power in the implicated organ; and that if a proud high-minded patient dies after a long disorder, phrenological principles would scarcely justify the expectation of finding the organ of self-esteem so to have protruded and worked upon the internal surface of the skull, as to have occasioned the portion of the cranium corresponding to the organ to be worn down into thinness.*

Our conclusion from the whole is the conclusion

* A case was related in the London Medical Society, some time since, I think by Mr. Callaway, of a person dying of diseased brain, and of dissection discovering nearly one-half of the cerebellum changed from brain-matter into the matter of an abscess. In this case I put the question, “was the sexual function much interfered with?” and the narrator of the case told us, at our next meeting, that this change had been conspicuous; I am pretty sure he stated, that at the first the person mani-

of Rasselias, in which “nothing is concluded.” Most certain, however, it is to my mind, that much *læsion* may take place in the brain function, without our being able to say what that *læsion* consists of, radically and primarily. And it is likely that there will always be something that will escape the power of the scalpel to expose, or of even the microscope to detect. After the continuance of these excitations, (of whatever they may consist,) or after their frequent recurrence—then, indeed, something more perceptible and tangible occurs; but even these sequential changes are often, very often, of such an obscure and anomalous kind, that the term *inflammation*, even with the assistance of the adjective *chronic*, fails in expressing to the full its nature, or at all accounting for its extent and effects.

fested inordinate excitation, which eventually was followed by comparative indifference, and deficient power. Such being the order of things, would be conformable to phrenological principles, and in harmony with the results I have spoken of in the text.

CHAPTER VI.

PROSPECTS OF RECOVERY, OR THREATS OF PERMANENCE.

MEDICAL terms are for the most part barbarous ; and, so far as it is at all consistent with the nature and design of the present treatise, I am disposed to avoid them. It is, however, much easier to find fault than to find remedies ; and it is of course requisite to devise some leading words, in order to embody, as much as may be, a general principle or a series of circumstances. I could not, however, persuade myself to write prognosis at the top of the present page, and I take occasion here to intimate, that were medical authors to supersede as much as possible a harsh terminology, and “ exhibit medicine in the simplicity of nature and the nakedness of truth,” they would be likely to command more unreserved respect, and be listened to with greater attention.

The two points on which anxiety will especially turn in reference to insanity—itself an illegitimate term—are, what will be its probable duration ? and whether is it likely to terminate in health, or in demency, or in death ?

I have already given my opinion as to the extent

in which hereditary tendency to mental disorder ought to be received ; and it may be here stated, in addition, that the chances of recovery are against those in whom the malady can be clearly traced to an hereditary disposition. This is an observation of Dr. Cox, who has had extensive opportunities of witnessing mental affection in all its varieties : several other writers have also noticed the same thing, and my own observation accords with it ; it is especially an unfavourable occurrence when the disorder assumes the same shape as it did in other members of the same family. When apoplexy or paralysis is followed by an insane condition, or the subject of such attacks, instead of completely succumbing, or thoroughly recovering, becomes insane or demented, there is exceedingly little to expect in the way of recovery.

If the madman be an epileptic—which is very often the case—the mental disorder will not seldom continue for some time in the same state, and then proceed from bad to worse, till death happily closes the scene : epileptics are indeed among the worst cases as to any hopes of recovery. So proverbially common is protracted and irremediable affection under these circumstances, that our two great institutions, Bethlem and St. Luke's, in a spirit of cruel policy, close their doors against epileptics—which particular, by the way, ought to be taken into account when comparative estimates are instituted in respect to the number of deaths and dismissals from one or another establishment.

I may here remark, that hopes of recovery will be better founded when the patient is violent and furious, than when he is melancholic ; and more especially when, in the latter case, the disease shall have been gradually acquiring its fulness of growth ; if the subject of hallucination vary, and the patient now conceives this absurdity and now another, reason is more likely to take place of demency than when the convictions of the madman are obstinate, and mainly rest upon one point.

It has been mentioned in another place, that corporeal disorder must necessarily have place in all cases of mental aberration—indeed, we know nothing of any disorder but what is bodily—but it is to be further remarked, that when these bodily sources of disturbed tranquillity are more obvious, expectations of a happy issue may be more safely indulged. When insanity occurs as a consequence of parturition, (puerperal madness,) it is, for the most part, curable, if judiciously managed. Almost all maniacal states are, however, liable to recur, unless much care be taken against it ; this may be especially predicated of puerperal insanity ; and this, indeed, constitutes one of its most distressing peculiarities.

Dr. Darwin well remarks, that when an individual becomes insane, who has a small family of children to solicit his attention, the hope of recovery is but small, as it shows the maniacal hallucination to be stronger than those ideas which usually interest us most. And Haslam further states, that in those

instances where insanity has been produced by a train of unavoidable misfortunes, as when a father of a large family, with the most laborious exertions, ineffectually struggles to maintain it, the number who recover is very small.

We are told by Pinel, that religious insanity is for the most part fatal. Haslam also gives the same opinion, as do Cox, Hallaran, and others ; I must confess, however, so far as my own observation goes, this is not precisely the case.

When the disorder remits, a cure is more likely to be effected, than had a given period been occupied with an unvaried hallucination ; it is, of course, well to observe remissions in all maladies, as they are rather demonstrations, than otherwise, that structure is not much implicated, I mean, in the way of permanent disorganization. A year is generally put down for probation, and it has been thought that, after this time, disorganization, or, at any rate, permanence of the malady, is to be concluded on. This period, however, is too short. “Dr. Sutherland (I extract from Spurzheim) is of opinion, that one year is decidedly too short a period at which to give up any expectations of cure, and, consequently, any medical treatment. There are frequently patients who recover after that period. Therefore, dismissing patients, after having been twelve months in St. Luke’s hospital, they never make use of the term ‘incurable’ ; they merely dismiss them ‘uncured.’”

“If convalescents return to their primitive tastes,

pursuits, and habits, it is a good indication of their final and complete re-establishment. Dr. Rush relates, that in a young man of the name of Wilkinson, the habit of stammering was suspended during his derangement, but returned as soon as he began to mend. Dr. Rush also mentions, that a Mrs. D. said to him one day, in passing by her in the hospital, and asking how she was, that she was perfectly well, and that she was sure this was the case, because she had at last ceased to hate him. A similar instance of perfect recovery, succeeding the revival of domestic respect and affection, occurred in a Miss H., who was confined in the year 1800. For several weeks she discovered every mark of a sound mind, except one; she hated her father. On a certain day, she acknowledged with pleasure a return of her filial attachment and affection for him, and soon after she was discharged cured."

I have introduced this extract, because I think the statements in it are most important, being exceedingly correct. Nothing, from the lowest degree of hallucination, or mere nervousness, up to the highest measure of insanity, is more indicative of returning perception and consciousness, or of a complete revolution in the patient's state, than the return of former affections. When the insanity, however, has been of very long standing, and the patient is much worn down by age or disease, these changes often threaten death, rather than promise recovery; in that case, however, they are to be hailed as happy omens, since the return to reason, prior to

decease, is a pleasing circumstance for relatives and friends, and how much less is death to be dreaded than drivelling demency !

In regard to congenital idiotcy, or that kind of mindlessness which is coeval with birth, and depends upon defective quantity of brain, expectation of improvement cannot be entertained ; there is, however, if the phrenologists be right, and in this particular I believe them so, a considerable power in well directed discipline to correct partial idiotcy, by forcing into act and being those faculties which are dormant, or of themselves incapable of any manifestation without this sort of education now alluded to. How melancholy it is to reflect, that such instances as that of the young lady whose case excited recently so much of public interest, might have been prevented from disgracing herself, and distressing her relatives, might have been preserved from the grasp of charged cupidity, or from the custody of Chancery, by a judicious application, early commenced, and cautiously, yet perseveringly pursued, of that science which teaches that the brain mass is susceptible of being drawn out or expanded in particular directions, according to individual deficiencies on the one hand, or redundancies on the other !

I shall, of course, have to take up this consideration, when on the subject of treatment ; I only in this place allude to it, inasmuch as expectations of redemption from, at any rate, a degree of idiotcy, may be contemplated, under phrenological training ; and

therefore our prognosis (for once to use the word) may prove more favourable than it hitherto has been, in a-mentia, as it may be termed, in contradistinction to dementia, which last supposes disorganization, and consequent disorder, beyond the reach of art.

CHAPTER VII.

PREVENTIVES OF INSANITY.

THESE are obviously to be sought for in the exciting sources ; and in strict propriety, the consideration of the two should be entered upon together, since to shun what is likely to occasion madness, is the most likely mode of retaining mental health.

I am desirous, however, to be a little more direct and positive in the present instance, since it seems, to my apprehension, that the doctrine of preventives is, for the most part, considered too vaguely, or slurred over too technically, in treatises on insanity ; and it cannot fail of being admitted, that provided the power is in our hands of preventing disposition to mental disquietude, we cannot be too earnest and systematic in bringing such power properly to bear and largely to be applied.

In the various hints and intimations that have been scattered among these pages, will already have been found proofs that the author of them, is, as it will be said by most, *bitten* by phrenology. The obloquy which such charge implies I must of course be content to bear, for thinking as I do on the

applicability of phrenological principle to measures preventive of insanity, I should not do justice to my conscience, were I to shrink from declaring my sentiments, under the apprehension of being stigmatized as a visionary.

Now, if there be any proof of the power of training to alter the configuration of the brain, and with that alteration to effect the physical, intellectual, moral, and religious character, it must follow that the measures which are adopted for these purposes are, collaterally at least, susceptible of much systematizing and improvement, by studying character more than has hitherto been done, through the media of anatomical and physiological science.

On the day immediately preceding that on which I am now writing, (July 8, 1833,) I witnessed the public exhibition of two very extraordinary men; the cranial formation of which men exactly answers to the respective qualities of their mind, as exhibited from the pulpit; and I have very little, if any doubt, that these individuals, had they been differently circumstanced from what they have been, would at this moment have had their heads moulded with proportioned variety. The high imaginative organization of the one, and the combination of these tokens with that of the reasoning and perceptive indications of the other, need only be stated to some of my readers, and they will easily understand to whom I refer.

Who is there that does not estimate highly the grand points of character displayed by one of these

persons, mixed, as they are, with so many humiliating vagaries? and who does not feel the value of cultivation, lopping, and pruning, could it be applied to push out those parts of his mental organization, which, from lying dormant, permit the other faculties to take such lofty flights and eccentric courses? There is, indeed, a grandeur in the mental circumstance altogether of the poetical preacher now referred to, which cannot fail of exciting the greatest respect, mingled, as the respect must be, with commiseration for his wanderings; and it is especially deplorable to feel that, without any deterioration of his genius, his perceptive and reasoning powers, had they been brought duly out, might have prevented him from becoming the ridicule of inferior men, who eagerly seize opportunities for running down, as it is expressively termed, those rich endowments, to the worth and value of which they are quite insensible.

Dr. Beddoes, in one of his essays, asks what is education? To which the reply is sufficiently obvious. It is, in fact, that direction of the mental energies which is calculated to meet the demands of respective individuals, as such demands are displayed by early indications, or regulated by future destinations? I was, a few days since, conversing with an artist—artists are almost all of them phrenologists—who told me, that had his education from the first been conducted with a knowledge of phrenology, many days and years of mental disquietude would have been saved him; of disquietude which

often brought him to the brink of suicide, and greatly obstructed his progress in art. I have a son who has a constitutional inaptitude for the ready reception of mathematical and physical truth. He is manifestly deficient in the perceptive organs ; I have urged upon him the necessity of more than ordinary application to those points in which he is naturally, or, in other words, organically dull ; and not to let his conscious hcbetude depress his mind, but to recollect, while his fellow-students out-run him in this, he distances them in other pursuits : and under this training it is curious to see (for if phrenology and half a century of life have not blinded me, I do see) the perceptive and reasoning organization come out with his improvement in power over those subjects which call for especial integrity in those portions of the brain which give, or at least direct, these powers.

It may be urged by those who are averse from the reception of these organic tenets, that mere observation of temperament and tendency, without the aid of any phrenological gauge, would amply suffice to direct the mental energies, both in the way of impelling and restraining ; and it is certain a great deal may be effected on the ground alone of observing character from its earliest dawn ; but he knows little of human nature who questions the expediency of double incentives and complicated motives for the insurance of any good result. Against the notion of making the intellect thus dependent upon lengths and breadths, of forming character by

forcing an inch of the cerebral mass in this course, and forbidding its development in that our feelings may revolt; but when persons can once be satisfied that such is absolutely the mode in which nature herself effects the same purpose, and when once the physiologist finds that the same law holds good in brain as in other organized parts, and when, moreover, an altered individual has it demonstrated to him that not only his internal powers, but his outward conformation, has been modified, and may yet be more modified by his own exertions, then even the materialism, if I may so express it, of the process will come to be interesting, and the self-condemnation of a character in finding and feeling his skull to bulge out in its bad parts—bad, when exercised inordinately—will come also to be an additional motive for arresting his career of folly and vice before the day of probation be past, and before the awful mandate becomes applicable to his own case ; “ he that is filthy, let him be filthy still.”

But it is for me to confine myself to my own particular province, and let me now urge upon parents who are desirous that their progeny shall be kept in the paths of intellectual rectitude, early to study nascent peculiarities, and adapt themselves and their training to these peculiarities.

The growing good sense of society is indeed conspicuous in reference to these things. Little masters and misses are not, as they were wont to be, such prodigies. Companies are not bored to death by juvenile exhibitions of mighty powers ; the

rod is not employed so much to correct what is incorrigible by these means. It is not now thought that because a mere infant is expert in one department of knowledge, that he is a genius, and has a claim to lord it over his brother, who, though perhaps less ready in those faculties which easily perceive, and readily take in, is, in respect of higher qualities, far, very far, superior to his talented rattling competitor, and at the end of the course, provided that course be properly regulated, will come in with more flaming colour, and with a more legitimate title to honours and rewards.

It is a very curious fact, that the young French student is, for the most part, far before the student of this country in ready acquirement; and I believe it will be found that the principal secret of this superiority does not so much consist in national, but in *educational* difference; the modes of initiation in France go much more upon the early employment of the perceptive powers, while our youth, on the contrary, are exercised in the cultivation of those faculties which eventually come more to ennoble the character, but the more exclusive cultivation of which renders us dull and inapt, while the Frenchman is alive and expert. I am anxious that the two goods should be as much as possible united; I am desirous that art should be made to assist the deficiency of nature, and that education should, as exactly as possible, be directed according to nascent tendencies. Then should we retain the *poetry* of our character, while we preserved our youth from

those aberrations which too much indulgence in ideal habit is apt to lead to.

Dr. Pinel, in his work on insanity, states that, "on examining the registers of the Bicêtre, he found inscribed, 'a great many monks and priests, as also a great many country people, who had been driven beside themselves by horrid pictures of futurity; several artists, as sculptors, painters, and musicians; some versifiers in love with their own productions; a pretty considerable number of advocates and attorneys; but there does not appear the name of a single person accustomed to the habitual exercise of his intellectual faculties, not one naturalist, or natural philosopher of ability, not a chemist or geometrician.' It has been remarked," says Beddoes, to whom I am immediately indebted for this extract from Pinel, "as singular at the Charité at Berlin, that several chaplains became insane in succession. But this seems to be imputed to their situation as chaplains, though the spectacle of madness does not appear to have affected other officers of the house, or attendants upon the insane, in the same manner."

In the above list poets, properly so called, are not found.* Why is this? Most assuredly because

* Versifiers there are, but the difference between the versifier and poet is wide indeed! What volumes of paper might be saved from loading the booksellers' shelves, what quantities of canvass might be better employed than it is, and how many intellects might be prevented from aberration, were the *cleverists*

a great poet is a great observer. All natural and moral circumstance comes before him as mental food; he has not the absurd vanity of supposing he is a genius, because he may be destitute of this or that faculty, in the spirit of one of our witty writers, who almost boasted that he "never could comprehend the principles upon which a squirrel's cage is constructed:" he is aware of the necessity for cultivating all his powers, of making every thing contributory to his endowments, and thus, by gaining a facility of observation, he comes to make the materials of his observation the materials for enriching his imagination.

What constituted the especial superiority of Shakespeare beyond all other poets? Acute and minute observation, a familiar acquaintance both with men and things, an aptitude, natural and acquired, at constant and repeated investigation, and not the mere power of composing in metre, or framing a flowing period. Indeed, the magnificence of Shakespeare's genius comes out in bolder colours, and stronger forms, when he depends entirely upon the strength of his subject, and does not call into aid any adventitious trappings. Where is there a finer piece of poetry, in any language, than in that soliloquy of

of the present day to do, and to leave undone, under the continued impression of the truths contained in the following couplet :

" Of all vain fools with coxcomb talents curst,
Bad poets and bad painters are the worst."

Hamlet in which he represents nature as being sublime to a mind attuned for sublimity; but, to others, "a congregation of vapours?" and where can we look for a finer exemplification of our present principles, than in the character and history of our great national boast?

Having written the above sentence, I cast my eyes upon the bust of Shakespeare, which is on my book-shelves before me; and I find, together with a high swell of the imaginative powers, a marked strength in the perceptive organs. But "enough of your phrenological rant," may the reader say, "do let us proceed with business."

Ecclesiastics, it will have been observed, according to the report of Pinel, are subject to mental aberration. They are so probably on this ground; that with much of what is amiable in character, their habits and studies have been such as to excite sentiment, without satisfying it. I have seen much of the nervousness of our own clergy, especially among those who reside in the country; and it is easy enough to understand why such should be the case, when we take into account, that with minds richly endowed by university lore, they are thrown into the solitude and dreariness of uncongenial society—regarded by this society as mere material for filling up a vacuum, and even, in some instances, treated with contumely in place of respect. Some individuals, under these circumstances, fly to the sort of *dram* remedy of becoming common-place parsons, and dine, and drink, and hunt with the gentlemen and yeomanry of the

neighbourhood. Others become morose in their religion, and “ holier than thou art” in their deportment; while others sink into a listless existence, and either vegetate, *or go mad.*

It may be permitted me here incidently to remark, that the improvement lately introduced into the habits of our aristocracy must come eventually to ameliorate the condition of the country clergy, and ministers of religion generally; and this more especially in situations remote from the metropolis, or other great towns: in these last there is constantly something to *excite*, and therefore to preserve an interest in life, while the rustic is obliged to throw himself more upon his own resources, and be contented with the limited association of his district. Let these resources be such, let this company be of that kind, that he *can* throw himself upon, or commingle with, while he preserves the manliness and rectitude of his *caste* and calling—and he will then be much more secure than others are against the encroachment of ennui, and its worst of all consequences.

Independence upon external circumstance for happiness, ought perhaps to be made less a theme for *advice*, than an ingredient in mental training. Say to a man such pleasure is unlawful, such indulgence will lead to misery in this world, and punishment in the world to come. Preach about industry, and contrast it with idleness as much as you may, but you will fail of your object if you do not gradually and habitually, and without reference to consequences, direct the mind into feelings and practices which are

calculated to preserve self-respect, which tend to demonstrate the dignity and destiny of man, which harmonize with those principles that rather teach the connection there is between physical, and intellectual, and moral well-being, than those which place pleasure and punishment in a sort of antithetical opposition to each other. Pleasure! why it is, or ought to be, the object of all education to procure for its subject as large a sum of pleasurable sensation as possible. Pain! punishment! independently of all future considerations, you provide for yourself a sufficiently ample quantity of them, by chancing happiness in a wrong direction; and, in a word, you guard yourself against the inroads of nervous or mental disorder, by keeping the faculties in constant and relative exercise, and not suffering a morbid sensibility to say nay to a manly determination of deserving and of enjoying.

Religion, as a source of madness, I have already alluded to. I have already allowed that there have occasionally been too much of cloven-foot covert intimations in reference to this point, which might, in justice to the cause, and in respect to individuals, have been dispensed with. I have no right, indeed, to question motive on either side, but I certainly do think that opinions on the evil tendency of even erroneous faith may have been unconsciously exaggerated by prejudiced observers. The plain case, as I have elsewhere stated, I take to be this: in constitutions prone to mental aberration, or among individuals so framed and circumstanced, that an exciting cause is only

wanting to bring the latent tendency into life and action, vivid representations or conceptions respecting the awful concerns of futurity, are perhaps more operative in overturning the understanding than any other single excitement. But madness, for the most part, is a complicated effect; and it must ever be recollected, that despondent feelings and maniacal horrors, on the score of religion, are more frequently the consequence than the cause of the condition we deplore.

But having conceded so much, I would stop short of further concession; and I would, without wishing to impugn the motives, or hastily to condemn the practice of others, unhesitatingly object to the inculcation of those articles of belief which go upon the principle of selection and exclusion on the part of the Deity. If what is called Calvinism—perhaps vaguely—did not go far towards clouding the mind of Cowper, I know not what evidence is. “There is a great wall,” (said he once in awful confidence to his biographer, Mr. Haley,) “there is a great wall built between me and heaven, which it is impossible I should ever scale.” Here it may be objected, that it was not so much the severity of the doctrine as the sensitiveness of the individual that was at fault, but surely *any* principles which in any mind could lead to such feelings, must have in them something highly objectionable.

I can speak for myself on this point. My excellent parents, with the best intentions, fostered my tendencies, from a child, to religious impressions,

and the impress they laboured to effect, with the most parental solicitude for my welfare, was of the gloomy cast. I was taught that “seriousness *was* constraint, that freedom was levity;” and I was, moreover, instructed in the belief of final perseverance and final exclusion. This is not the place to investigate the validity of tenets like these, but it is the place to say, that early initiation into them is calculated to give a gloom to after days, even though you should now be persuaded that strong doctrinal points are mingled with much error, and founded greatly upon a misconception and misapplication of scriptural phraseology. “A devout person reads in his Bible that all flesh is grass.” He has been accustomed to attach literal and positive significations to passages that were obviously intended for any thing but such interpretation. He is melancholy, and on the eve of decided madness; “the words strike him. He ruminates. He is, doubtless, flesh; but he has irrefragable authority for believing that flesh is grass; therefore he is grass himself. What logic can be clearer! If he has gained this step, how easily may he go on to apply to his person all the qualities of grass. He may act upon it—that is, according to Dr. Darwin, he may raise delirium into insanity, by standing out all night to receive the refreshing dews, and lurking all day in the cellar to avoid the parching sun. As the seasons revolve, he may employ literally a language much like that which WOLSEY uses metaphorically—

“I am fallen into the sere, the yellow leaf.”

“ Thus it is,” says the author from whom I have made the above quotation, (and who, by the way, goes, in my mind, too far in his condemnation of religious sentiment—the bond of every thing that is worth holding together in life,) “ thus it is that the votaries of devotion of a gloomy character often lose their wits, and have the place supplied by depressing imaginations. A poor collier heard a field preacher rave much about damnation; he immediately felt himself encompassed by the terrors of hell. On a dreary winter’s day, he was found more than half naked, squatting in the twilight of his chimney corner. As the wind howled over the heath, ‘ Hark !’ says he to a medical person, entering to inspect his situation, ‘ there is the devil come to fetch me in his chariot—did you not hear his horses neigh ?’ For keeping the intellects sound,” continues our author, “ or if it comes to the worst, for merging them in cheerful madness, how much preferable is

A false religion, full of pomp and gold,
to a religion full of damning dogmas, which must
necessarily be false !”

I have no desire to enter into the question of what is, with the most loose application of terms, called methodism,* upon the morals and habits of the com-

* It is curious that this word methodism, which is employed as a word of reproach, is more misemployed than almost any word in the language; and that it is considered a sort of synonym for Calvinism, while the methodists, as a sect—that is, the followers of Mr. Wesley—are almost as different, in their religious tenets, from the Calvinists, as are the latter from Unitarians. So much for by or watch-words, or cant condemnation of canting

munity ; I have no wish, in this place, either to uphold or condemn the creed of the Romanist, to which Dr. Beddoes thus antithetically, and I must say rather malignantly refers ; but both my wishes and the occasion prompt me to enlarge a little more on the subject of certain religious persuasions being so mixed up with the earliest impressions and associations which constitute the education of infancy, as to interfere, in after years, with freedom of thought and strength of moral character, and enjoyment of existence, such enjoyment as becomes an accountable, and immortal, but still a rational being. It has been already intimated that I purpose, with this intention, making use of a most affecting and interesting narrative presented to us by Dr. Burrows, and which bears more, perhaps, to my present point than any thing else I could urge in the way of illustration.

A young lady, aged about twenty-two, not the only member of her family marked by natural genius, but of *acutely nervous sensibility*, and delicacy of constitution, had, from living in a state of affluence, retired with her mother to a modest cottage, in a beautifully situated village, where she soon engaged herself in every pursuit that an ardent imagination and pure philanthropy dictate. She was the instructress of the poor, and the comforter of the distressed. *In short, she was an enthusiast in every opinion she adopted, or duty that she undertook.* In this frame of body and mind, a minister, not less remarkable for his zeal than for his persuasive powers in enforcing

certain theological tenets, settled in the same place. Struck with his discourses, she gradually imbibed his doctrines, though very opposite to (from) those she had been taught. She grew very disquieted; and although becomingly pious and attentive before, henceforth she devoted herself entirely to theological studies; but without interruption of those good works in which she was ever engaged. Her health, however, soon suffered by the extraordinary ardour she displayed in the performance of the various duties she had now undertaken. To wean her from pursuits which were evidently making as great inroads on her peace of mind as on her corporeal system, she was removed to the sea-side. Here her case was unfortunately mistaken, her health grew worse, and her spirits more unequal. She returned home, and it was at this period she wrote to a physician in a contiguous provincial city, not less distinguished for his private qualities than his love of science, the following letter :

“ Dear Sir,—The benevolent and persevering attention which I saw you exercise last summer for my unhappy friends, induces me to think that any opportunity of doing good is welcome to you, and that you will not, on account of its length, and the time it may occupy, refuse to read the statement of a case which I think requires a fuller explanation than ordinary.

“ I am not, I hope, prompted to write to you by the despicable wish to speak of myself, but by a sincere desire to profit by your assistance in avoiding

errors, and becoming as useful as the measure of my talents will permit.

“ I believe your penetration must have discovered, when my mother consulted you for me, that I concealed some part of my disorder from you ; and you probably conjectured the hidden part was a mental disease ; since whatever terrors infirmity of body may bring on, weakness of mind, I believe, can only produce an excessive fear of human opinions.

“ It was early decided by a medical friend of my family, that my constitution was extremely irritable, a sentence which was quite incomprehensible to me till experience too well explained it. In my earliest childhood my spirits were very weak, and I frequently shed tears, though when asked by my mother what was the reason, I never could give any. However, I felt that I wanted something. Perhaps the discipline used for me was not exactly suited ; but I know not how it could have been otherwise, since my mother’s natural character was as different as possible from mine, so that no experience could lead her to understand me. My outward appearance was exceedingly calm, so that I resembled more the statue of a child than one alive. My mother thought that so much apparent moderation needed no correction, and she did not know that I wanted all the assistance that the most watchful care could give me. As this was the case, I was too much indulged, I believe. As a father, Sir, you will comprehend many little things that to another might appear ridiculous, and they will not

appear unimportant to you, because they are childish. Amongst your children's books there may, perhaps, be one of scripture history, with prints, and amongst them one of Nebuchadnezzar in his state of degradation, very ill executed, and probably ridiculous enough. When I was very little, perhaps before I could read, my mother found me crying violently over this print, and on enquiry, found it was because I thought I might, at some time or other, become like this king. She laughed at me very naturally, and I felt much relieved, and thought there was no danger. Yet, if I am not mistaken, I then felt, for the first time, that fear and abhorrence of evil, which has never, till lately, been sufficiently strong in my mind to produce good.

“The clergyman of my native place is a very good man. His doctrines were, in that country, almost universally considered as methodistical ; yet they are to be found in almost every page of the Bible, and at this time are preached, I believe, in almost every pulpit, from that of the university to that of the most obscure village, as the doctrines of the Church of England. Opposition had perhaps inflamed his zeal, and induced him to dwell more on faith than morality ; and it was very seldom we heard him explain and enforce the intimate union between them ; his sermons made considerable impression on my mind ; but the violence, rather than the warmth of his manner, made it a painful one, and it was not productive of any active effect.

“When I was about twelve years old, my sister,

a child of extraordinary talents and virtues, died at the age of fourteen, with Christian hope and joy. Her death, succeeded as it was by a train of family misfortunes, very much withdrew my mother's attention from me, and I became almost completely at my own disposal. In a year or two I fell into extreme indolence. In this slavery I have remained till within a few days, not without almost constant self-abhorrence, and some severe struggles.

“Your knowledge, Sir, must make it unnecessary for me to describe the debility of constitution, the stupidity of understanding, and the insensibility of heart which are the consequences of sloth. From these assuredly nothing but the mercy of God could deliver me. This I have long resisted, though I have seen it in the beauty of the material creation, heard it from the lips of human genius, and felt it in the application of the scriptures to my conscience.

“Now that I have conquered my sinful habit, and have reason to hope that ‘more grace will be given,’ I have still some very painful apprehensions. The weakness of my understanding is such, that a short calculation, or a few moves at chess, gives me a violent head-ache and a universal trembling. The activity and force of my imagination appear to me such, that, if I were left to myself, there is no extravagance of which I could not be guilty. I have happily found some little active employment; but when I am doing any thing which is merely mechanical, I feel as if (without any intention of removing) it were

impossible for me to keep my seat. When at such times I can find an opportunity of reading a few verses in the Bible, I feel immediately quite calm; but I cannot quite avoid the fear that I should abuse even the medicine of life. I have, happily, in my brother, a friend on whose strength of mind and goodness of heart I can rely with perfect confidence; but he, perhaps, wants some of that peculiar knowledge and experience that may be necessary for me. A sensation of sickness, which accompanies my most impatient feelings, and, a degree of restlessness at night, give me some hopes that, by the aid of medicine, I may be placed in a more secure state.

“ You will, I hope, excuse the length of my letter, as I thought it right to give you a true and sincere statement of my course of life, as far as regards this subject.

“ I must add, that nothing but my belief of your confidence in the sacrifice which has been made for the sins of the whole world, could have induced me to make this disclosure. If I had not this faith, the knowledge of my offences would be death to me; and I cannot endure that any person who does not possess it should know them.”

We are told by the narrator of this case, that the writer of the letter just transcribed had a severe paroxysm of mania in about a fortnight from its date; and that her ramblings during this visitation were all bent on religious subjects. Upon the restoration of her understanding, we are further informed, she again

resumed all the elegant and lighter accomplishments of which she was mistress, but had long neglected; then, contrary to advice, she returned to her usual place of residence. Former associations were here renewed; her health soon again became disordered; shortly she imbibed the most frightful and delusive notions, and she was threatened with a complete relapse into her former mental malady.

Now here we have an instance most decidedly in point, proving the evil consequences of defective education in early years. Had this young lady, instead of being permitted to dwell over such representations as the grazing Nebuchadnezzar, with pictured Apollyons, and all the paraphernalia of such like early initiation, been instructed in the true nature and design of her being; had her reading been directed to such writers as Mrs. Barbauld and Miss Edgeworth; had she been made to understand the true relations she stood in, both to this world and the world to come, (not by placing before her, in an obligatory way, so much duty and so much penance for neglect of duty, but by opening out her understanding, exciting her gratitude, and forming her principles,) when she came to years of full maturity and reflection, she would not have so readily succumbed under the new terrors of her new teacher, but would have been in a fit state to receive admonition and reject extravagance.

It is not within the compass of my design, to enquire whether the instruction alluded to was abstractedly legitimate, or otherwise; it was manifestly any

thing but medicine to her mind—nay, it was obviously the source of her madness; and, what I am most anxious to enforce upon the parents and guardians of infancy, is the necessity of withholding that kind of religious impress—misnamed instruction—which debilitates the already feeble nerve, and renders the mind unfit to judge rationally of religious requisites. Many miserable moments would be saved to manhood, by guarding the earliest dawn of opening day from the clouds of superstition, and the mists of prejudice.

High-mindedness, as well as enthusiasm and superstition, ought sedulously to be curbed. The organ of self-esteem requires early watching; and it may, by proper management, (let the reader ridicule as much as he please,) be brought down and restrained, as well as fostered into undue magnitude and activity by opposite management; and in thus effecting a change of conformation and tendency, you may secure against actual insanity. But this change must not be attempted by a prosing advice-giver, by a bungling dealer in common-place mandates and “wise saws,” which are rather calculated to excite distaste and scorn, than to be received with kindness and used with profit. The youth should be taught in the school of comparison—he should be made to see and to feel that others, with less of pretension, have more of real power; and thus should he be rather directed than forced into that kind of estimate of himself and his talents, which would prove the safest guardian of his moral and mental welfare.

Again, the drunkard is not to be preached out of

his destructive and demoralizing habits, nor slavishly bound by the oaths of temperance societies—oaths which a self-deceiving disposition shall soon convert into pie-crust matter—but his better feelings are to be appealed to; the neglect of his duty, as part and parcel of a social compact, to be opened out to him; his suicidal practices to be forcibly pourtrayed; the mistaken notions of “a short life and merry one” to be powerfully represented, it being a short and a *gloomy* existence that he is chalking out for himself. All these items of restriction must not be doled out to him, by men of good heart and weak heads; but, in order to be effectual, the actual advice should have as little as it well can have of seeming advice.

There are several physical, and some more strictly and purely moral conditions which lead to insanity, but which will be best adverted to under the head of treatment; and we may conclude this section by remarking, that he will be most likely to be insured against melancholy, and madness, and demency, or the disorders which lead to them, who has learnt the art of being happy with cheaply-bought pleasures; who cultivates a disposition to content, as opposed to that of querulousness; who assiduously keeps his nerves alive to pleasurable, and dead to painful sensation; who preserves with the same assiduity a self-respect, not founded on any consciousness of strength without the interference of mightier aid; but on the conviction that the economy of providence leaves much for himself to do, and much to be answerable

for, who mixes religious sentiment with charitable conduct, and who is made to understand that piety is not to be measured by ardour of feeling, by strength of passion, or by a monkish seclusion from the elegancies and pleasures of social existence.

If I should be told that all this moralizing is beside my mark, I rebut the charge. *Every thing* has to do with the subject more immediately under consideration that may have either a direct or indirect connection with the general welfare of the body politic, in consistency with the principles inculcated throughout the present essay, which, to give them force, have probably been sketched out even with caricature boldness, *viz.*—that insanity is not a specific something to be treated by its opposite specific ; that it is not the mere assumption of so much disease, and so much remedy, that are to be taken cognizance of by the discerning and conscientious practitioner of medicine ; I say that, in harmony with my anti-nosological notions, I hold it requisite to stretch out from particulars into generals ; to consider that *all society*, and not merely the inmates of a madhouse, ought to have its case and condition taken into account by a writer on mental malady ; that it is especially and most legitimately the duty of an author thus engaged to treat of man in general, from his cradle to his grave, and to endeavour at checking those early habits, and early associations, and early excitements, which, though formed with good meaning, are followed too often with dreadfully bad consequences.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONFINEMENT, CLASSIFICATION, CONTROL, AND COERCION.

NOTHING, at first sight, might seem less difficult to determine, than the question whether an individual should be forcibly separated from the social circle, be made an isolated and irresponsible being, and placed under other guardianship than his own. This question, even if not difficult, is one, it must be conceded, of the highest moment to decide upon correctly; but the fact is, that with all the seeming facility attending the inquiry whether a man be sufficiently mad for confinement and control, the greatest nicety and care is required to be put in exercise, in order that the solution be consistent with rectitude. Here our doctrine of *degrees* is of the utmost moment. A man may be sufficiently mad to render him the observation and the derision of his less-mad neighbours, without being so far gone as to warrant any legal interference with his doings. He does not "march into a well;" he does not indicate any disposition to suicide; he does not lay violent hands on those about him; he does not even consume his property so as to injure

his posterity; and while this is the case, what matters it whether he sit at his breakfast table with a weapon he calls "a bloody sword?" Who is to be the judge of his judgment respecting the value of his library? What, indeed, are all his waywardness, and blunderings, and strange talk to others? I may wish, indeed, if I have any connection with him, that his brain, either by nature or by education, had been better formed than it is. I may lament that his foolish father had the management of him from his infancy, instead of an individual who would duly have appreciated his deficiencies, and carefully supplied them; I may even wish now that he should be subjected to the phrenological training of depressing this portion, and pushing out that of the cerebral mass; but, being his own master, I have no right to insist upon such process; and still less have I a right to subject him to incarceration, spoliate his property, and place him, if not under mural, at any rate, under actual custody.

Had it happened to me to have penned the present section of my little treatise a month or two since, I should not thus have commenced it: but writing as I do, under the impression that the whole bearing of a recent case has made upon my mind, I have thought that more justice could not be done to my views on the subject of confinement, than by distinctly and directly adverting to that case.

Not long since, then, I was applied to by a respectable solicitor, to examine the mental condition of one of his clients. "I of course," was the

expression of my friend, "wish for nothing but justice, but I do not think it right that a commission should issue, without my client having all the medical and legal aid that can be justly brought to bear on his case." This man, according to my friend's own showing, had been from his childhood a strange composition of waywardness and imbecility, had recently lost his father, and was, probably in consequence of the shock, together with the consciousness of having become his own master, rendered still more irritable than ordinary; and under these circumstances it was requested that I should join another physician, and that we should both report faithfully our feelings in respect to the expediency of confining him. Our first interview with the patient did not promise so favourably to his cause, as did a subsequent and more systematic visit. After this visit, both my colleague in this business and myself, agreed that we could not, in justice to the individual or to our own consciences, pronounce him mad enough to be deprived of his natural and social rights. To this effect we gave our evidence. This favourable evidence was likewise backed by a great number of respectable tradesmen, with whom he had dealings, and even by his banker and broker, who all joined in the conclusion, that, though strange in his manner, he was correct in his transactions; and that they were as ready to negotiate with him now as they had ever been, under the conviction both of his probity and his capacity. Other most respectable physicians and

surgeons had come to a different conclusion respecting his state of mind: he appeared in court, and truly made a sorry appearance there. The case on both sides was gone into with great pains by the commissioner—an intelligent jury attended minutely to the *pros* and *cons* of insanity; and the decision of the majority was in favour of the commission.*

It will have been observed in reference to this case, that those persons who had the best opportunities of witnessing the individual's competency to the transaction of worldly affairs, were those whose evidence went against the commission; and I recollect one or two of them expressed, in my hearing, their astonishment that such competency should for a moment have been questioned. But he was of "unsound mind!"—then let the whole civilized world be converted into one large lunatic asylum; for if there be such a thing as unsound mind—if the very term does not imply the greatest absurdity—there is, as Dr. Haslam well stated in the trial of the young lady to whom allusion has already been more than once made—there is no person under the sun of sound mind. Eccentricities! what in the name of sense and rectitude have we to do with an individual's habits and conduct? Misconception! who is there that is not constantly misconceiving. Stupidity!

* It was reported in the daily papers that the verdict was an unanimous one, and that the jury immediately agreed upon it. This was not the case; they were out of court some time, and upon their return it was stated, that five out of their number dissented from the majority.

why the men at Newmarket think the men of Cambridge stupid for spending their time in the company of books rather than horses. Wayward, passionate, blundering ! whose property or persons would be secure, were every obstinate and passionate man to be incarcerated as a lunatic ? No—the question for decision is this, and this alone : Is the individual likely to injure himself or others ? And in spite of differing in opinion from many persons engaged in the trial now adverted to, and notwithstanding the delicacy which ought to be observed in expressing sentiments in opposition to those of honourable judges and intelligent juries, I am bound in conscience to say, that I could not conscientiously, and therefore not comfortably, have laid my head on my pillow, under the conviction that I had been at all instrumental in taking from this man the rights and privileges of man.

The simple business, I repeat, is to ascertain by rigid scrutiny, whether an individual be so constituted, so circumstanced, or so disordered, as that his own person and property, or the person and property of others, are rendered insecure by his being at large. And even this assumption ought not, in many cases, to be founded upon mere opinion, but, for the most part, it should be the result of some overt attempt on the part of the suspected. On this head I feel it right to express myself with considerable caution, and I am bound to admit that much reserve and qualification ought to be attached to the endeavour of drawing any thing like a correct

line of demarcation between what ought to be taken as probability, and what received as proof of absolute intention. Many cases of suicide, I will allow, might have been superseded by assuming the determination of an individual to perpetrate the deed; and it is certain that much suffering is often occasioned by a neglect of early recognition of *perpense* design. But then we ought to be pretty certain that destructive consequences will follow a particular demeanour, before we sanction severe measures, founded on the presumption of commencing mania, melancholic determination, or mental imbecility. Short of this, it is a person's own concern whether he choose to deviate from the ordinary habits of society, whether he put on his head a broad-brimmed hat while others wear a narrow one; whether he breakfast more comfortably with a shapeless instrument lying on his table, which he designates a bloody sword, whether he employ his time by looking at his bags of money as so much abstract bliss, or whether he think that a man without a dog and a gun is a pitiable being, wandering uselessly about on the world's wide surface.

In all these cases, then, (let me reiterate in concluding this part of my subject) it is not the *kind* but the measure of unsoundness, if the term must be employed, which should regulate our sentiments and conduct in reference to our fellow-men; and although it is difficult to put down on paper the constituents of insanity, or rather its degrees, the sum and substance of all inquisition should be,

whether this man be so far gone into misconception, and consequent misconduct, as to place his own safety or that of others in danger.

What I have hitherto advanced, principally refers to the suing for lunatic commissions; there are many circumstances which justify temporary control as a remedial measure, and where the cure is much facilitated by confinement, nay, is almost impossible to be effected without. Were madhouses considered, as they ought to be, merely hospitals for nervous invalids; were madness itself, as it ought to be, thought of merely as other disorders are thought of, and not looked upon as an especial visitation from "the world of terrible shadows," there would be found much less hesitation on the part of friends to subject the affected to their custody. Who hesitates about watching, and confining, and controlling the subject of delirium; and what is insanity but delirium in another form, and from another source? With what propriety would a person be designated as a person of "unsound mind," because his brain was inflamed, and he consequently saw, and felt, and acted very differently from the usual course of things? And what is madness but brain and nervous excitation quite as corporeal, although not so tangible, as when the blood-vessels are more implicated?

In a word, let the disorder be looked on physiologically and pathologically, rather than superstitiously, and we gain a great deal of ground in our

way to a correct appreciation of circumstance. The late Dr. Aiken once told me, that some of the best lives that were written for his biography, were sent to him from the house of Sir Jonathan Miles; they were composed by a person who had occasional visitations of insanity, and who was sensible of the approach of the paroxysms before they became established. His practice was to go to the house just mentioned, in order that he might insure for himself proper treatment during the absolute suspension of consciousness, and before and after the fits he employed himself as above intimated. A youth once applied to me, through the medium of a friend, to procure him a comfortable asylum from the world, till his nerves should be restored to a better condition. I took him to a house which I had heard of; here his case was not met by kindness and discrimination. I therefore sent him to Peckham, having just then heard of the establishment; the treatment was there just such as the circumstances demanded. He stayed sufficient time for the restoration of his nervous energy; afterwards often visited his friends there, as he called the superintendent and proprietors, and is now established in society. Here, then, are two instances, and they are merely selected out of a large number of others, which, but for madhouse guidance and controul, would, in all probability, have been cases of confirmed and irremediable insanity; and yet the *madhouse-phobia* continues in a degree to prevail, and will, I again assert, conti-

nue to prevail, till madness itself be viewed as a mere disorder, and treated of, in the same manner as other incidental deviations from physical integrity.

Cruelty is supposed to be exercised within the walls of a lunatic asylum. Than myself, I hope there is not a human being who would be more speedy and loud in his condemnation of cruelty ; but that such is the case it is more easy to aver than to prove, and I verily believe that, for the most part, tales of injustice and of harsh treatment, deserve much the same kind of credit as that which is to be given to the representations of school-boys when they are desirous to rid themselves of the thraldom implied in school discipline. Indeed, dealing with the mad has many points of similarity with that of dealing with the school inmate ; and I would state this to be one of the advantages connected with lunatic asylums, or professional management of the insane, that there is less severity needed than when their management is in the hands of relations or common nurses ; it is, indeed, astonishing to find how soon the invalids are made sensible that the custody under which they now are, has an authority attached to it, against which it is useless to rebel ; but like the school-boy, they are much happier in that restraint, provided the power of the keeper be exercised mercifully and with discretion ; just as the boy, spoiled during the holidays, feeling, the moment he enters the school-room, the necessity of putting aside all his domestic waywardness and wantonness, finds himself really much more com-

fortable than when he was the pet and the pest of the drawing-room at home.

I have just now in recollection the case of an amiable young lady, who was, during a very long period, under my care, and whose parents were desirous of putting off, as long as might be, the application for a nurse from an establishment. One whole night, from mere nervousness, she sat on the floor, moving and waving her hands and body in a strange unmeaning manner, and, at the same time, making as unmeaning a noise. I now thought it was high time almost peremptorily to urge new kind of management, and from the moment a Peckham nurse entered the room, (who, by the way, was a most gentle, kind-hearted, and excellent woman,) all this sort of thing was given up; and although my patient continued for a very long time highly nervous, we had no repetition of these insane ebullitions.

I am, however, in some degree, wandering from my intention of stating under what particular circumstances interference is justifiable. Not certainly for mere eccentricity, let that be carried as far as it may; not even for delusion, provided the delusion do not turn upon dangerous points, for how many deluded, aye, even deluded beyond the measure of ordinary delusion, are at this moment at large, and doing injury to none but themselves. I have now in recollection an artist, who is as firmly convinced as he exists, that spirits are hovering about him with the intention of constantly

annoying him; and he sometimes becomes angry with those who are in his company, because they do not, like him, hear the noise of these visitors, which, as he imagines, conceal themselves in the wall. Now who is there hardy enough to say, or wrong-headed enough to think, that this poor man should be sent to engrave in a madhouse, torn from his family and friends, merely because such an alteration had taken place in some part of the brain as to create these visionary conceits, while other parts of the brain retain their wonted power, and his faculties are not interfered with to the extent of doing mischief to himself or others. The poor doltish being to whom I referred in the commencement of the present section has likewise his conceits, one of which is, that a servant, to whom he is much attached as a faithful attendant, and, as he expresses it, excellent nurse, has, in some way or other, changed her face; he also thinks his “bloody sword” might be brought to do wonders did occasion require it, but he has continued deluded by these misconceptions for years, and during the whole of his life no one has ever received the least injury from him.

There is a vast number of cases in which the question of custody and control must be considered absolutely relative; a total idiot, either from birth or accident—an imbecile from apoplexy—a confirmed melancholic, may all be fit subjects for a lunatic asylum; but if relations choose to take the responsibility of their management, and the trouble of it into the bargain, it is not the business of others to interfere,

provided cruelty or gross mismanagement be not exercised. There are many instances of intellect having been broken down by age or by apoplexy, and where the persons thus attacked are rendered totally incapable of pursuing the ordinary duties of life; but attorney's power may be obtained under these circumstances, when properly attested, and the afflicted individual be kept still under his own vine and fig-tree. But even in these melancholy instances of demency, it behoves the legislature to take especial care that the power delegated to relations be not misused; in that case the individual injured has a right to plead his cause through the instrumentality of the law, and have justice done him, although unconscious of either law or justice.

One mistake requires to be rectified in reference to the keepers of madhouses, viz. that if not highly principled men, their object would be rather to retain an insane inmate, than to have recourse to means calculated to restore him. We cannot, in the first place, well conceive such a dereliction of moral principle as this practice implies, but it would not only prove cruelty, but bad policy on the part of the proprietor, since it must ultimately be to the advantage of any institution for their inmates to be constantly changed, just as it would bring, in the long run, more to the coffers of a physician, did he never find it necessary to attend any patient more than once or twice.

Some of the most perplexing cases that I have had placed before me for decision, as to right of interference on the ground of insanity, are those in which

the habit of intoxication is so irresistible, that persons well and orderly without spirituous liquors, never can resist the temptation of taking them when they can by any means be procured; and never thus take them without becoming, to all intents and purposes, in feeling, in act and in deed, verily and positively mad. A few weeks since I was consulted in a case of this kind. The wife of a very respectable tradesman had been attentive to all the proprieties of a wife, till this passion took hold of her; nay, to this hour conducts herself with the utmost propriety while spirituous liquors are, by contrivance or by force, kept from her; but the moment she is let loose to her own propensities, she enters with infatuation into all the horrible practices of a confirmed drunkard; even wanders about the streets, and haunts one public house after another, till after the lapse of some days she is brought home to her afflicted and still affectionate husband, insensible, pennyless, and sometimes almost without clothing!

In such cases as these—and in a greater or less degree they are constantly occurring—I feel I confess a hesitation in certifying insanity; but I could more conscientiously, and I am sure more properly, or rather usefully, do so, than in instances of mere eccentricity and innocent delusion. There is certainly a disordered state of mind prior to the more unequivocal disorder of drunkenness, and such a disorder as would be only kept from breaking out by forcible preventives.

At Peckham we have a lady who is subject to

epileptic fits, but who, in all her deportment and conversation, is not only correct, but delicate and refined; yet this female is precisely under the circumstances just stated, of incapability to resist the fascinations of spirits. She has been sent out two or three times upon fresh probation, but invariably returns in a state of intoxication, though she knows full well the consequences of giving way to the propensity.

Now, if any doubt existed as to the right of incarcerating this individual, the matter would be set at rest by the epileptic condition of her nerves; and it were mercy rather than cruelty to suppose the drunken wife, urged by some such irresistible power to the commission of otherwise the worst of crimes; the nervous system being as little under her own preventive guidance, as the rush of an epileptic attack. But in that case, other guidance than her own should be provided.

There is another difficulty which often presents itself, in reference to the absolute justice of confinement, and which must in some measure be left open to the decision of good sense and right feeling, beyond the authority of prescriptive rule; I allude to those cases which, while they are in asylum custody, do not exhibit the smallest characters of aberrated intellect, but become wild and ungovernable immediately they are set at large.

I scarcely ever visit our establishment but an appeal to me is made by one person in particular—"prove to me that I am mad, or else let me out." And while with us he is not mad, in the common ac-

ception of the word, but let him out, and he would be immediately running to taverns, and running up bills, which he would leave to be settled by his poor mother and brother, who are already half ruined by his half mad and half criminal conduct. I tell this man, in reply to his petitions for release, that he has only to choose between a madhouse and a jail, in the event of his liberation ; but there might be some question as to the propriety of not giving him that choice, had he not been sent to us unequivocally insane, and had he not forfeited his promises of steadiness by his conduct during a probationary release.

In a word, much principle, and judgment, and nicety of tact must necessarily be called into play, when we are required to determine the right of professional interference ; and it is not seldom the case that we may satisfy our own consciences on the rectitude of our conduct, without being able to give an account to others, which should be equally convincing. This is, indeed, conspicuously the case in all affairs which have any connection with medical science,—a science which, if any one does, requires, on the part of its professor, much good sense, and good taste, and great acumen, or we may blunder on the very ground of apparent simplicity and facility.

The question of classification naturally connects itself with that of confinement,—another source of much and erroneous speculation; so much so, that were I not afraid of the charge of undue levity, I might say that this ought to be added to the other

cants of the day ; if there be a cant of hypocrisy and " a cant of criticism," there assuredly is also a cant of classification. To hear some talk, you would imagine all the divisions of mental wandering so nicely adapted themselves to time, place, and circumstance, that there should be a separate receptacle for every species—a different abode for every grade of the disorder. Plans of this description would, however, soon develope their own nakedness and nothingness. There is scarcely one instance of insanity that corresponds in all points with another, so that these rigid classifiers would, upon their own principles, want materials for classifying.

I shall never be an advocate for indiscriminately herding together all kinds and degrees of madness ; I shall always oppose the principle of considering insanity in the abstract, and thinking only of a house for its reception, and a keeper for its guardian ; but, on the other hand, I am fully persuaded the notions which have lately obtained are not capable of being at all realized, and I feel convinced there is often a great deal of good done by putting individuals together, who are affected by different degrees of malady.

Madmen under confinement, as well as those at large, are very fond of power ; and I have often seen them assist epileptics, give their help to the imbecile, and ridicule the vagaries of their fellow inmates in such sort, that the very activity and power that are called into act are thus made to bear advantageously on their own state. " What a strange

mad fellow that is," I have often said to another madman, who shall be standing and looking with surprise and conscious superiority at the vagaries of his fellow inmate: and making him, whom I have addressed, thus the judger of insanity, has often seemed to excite him and improve his condition. To the more mad, likewise, the observation of those about them who are less mad, is often salutary. "I believe," says a modern writer, whom I have more than once quoted, "that it will frequently be enough if a dextrous performer out-herod the very extravagancies of the patient, or take up others as similar as possible. Simon Morin was shamed out of the idea of his incorporation with Jesus Christ by the folly of another madman, who supposed himself God the Father. A person who believed that he had been guillotined and fitted with a wrong head, was cured by the following contrivance. A jocular convalescent in the Bicêtre manages to turn the conversation on the miracle of St. Denys, who carried his head under his arm, and kissed it as he walked along. The lunatic vehemently maintained the possibility of the fact, and appealed to his own case. His companion burst out into a loud laugh, and asked him, in a tone of mockery, "Why how could St. Denys contrive to kiss his head? was it with his heel, you fool?" Now this convalescent, who thus considerably succeeded in destroying the hallucination of his companion, and who, probably, by the very consciousness of having done good, was made better himself, ought, upon the doctrine of

classification, as maintained by some, to have been far out of the way of doing good, either to himself or those about him.

To place the raving among the quiet, the individuals who still preserve a sense of decency with those who are lost to all its perceptions and restrictions, the well educated and refined with the vulgar and brutal, the blasphemer with the moral lunatic, those that are almost fully restored in company with those who have the disorder upon them in all its force and malignity, were obviously to do violence to all rectitude, and to make madhouses destructive of their main design—that of *curing and discharging their patients as speedily as possible*. But there is a natural and obvious division between poor and rich; and as to other separations, the judgment of the medical adviser and the superintendent would, if it exists in due measure, and in proper exercise, constitute a sufficient guarantee against forced companionship with such as are calculated to injure; and to such judgment much more deference is due than to any wild schemes of fancied benefit arising out of that extent of separation which must, from the very nature of things, amount almost to isolation; and isolation is, for the most part, of all things the most to be dreaded.

A patient of mine was placed in Peckham establishment with the understanding that he was to be kept away entirely from all the other inmates; the wishes of the friends were, of course, complied with in the spirit, and almost to the letter, but one or two

evenings, when he was suffered to enter the coffee-room with (some of them at least) gentlemen as well educated, and accustomed to as good society as himself, and to play a rubber at whist, of which, when well, he was very fond, he was much more comfortable, and more sane, too, than during the whole time of his confinement, having none but his attendant to associate with.

Should friends be permitted to visit the inmates of an establishment for the insane? On this head, as well as on that of classifying, good intention has taken the place of good practice. The very principle of seclusion is founded upon the necessity of breaking into accustomed associations, and forming new trains of thought and feeling. Here again our school analogy applies. Who does not know that a boy is as happy as the days are long while he is suffered to enjoy himself among his compars, and practically, as it were, to forget that there is such a thing as home. But let mamma visit him with her cakes and her prattle, and the tables are soon turned; his feelings take a new direction: after an afternoon's parlour chat, he returns with disgust to what was, on the previous evening, his delight, and it is the work of some time to bring him thoroughly round to his broken-in-upon enjoyments.

The insane, in like manner, are transported to a new scene; the necessity of the case comes to reconcile them to it; they lose recollection of former scene and circumstance; sane feelings begin to push away the misconceptions of insanity; convalescence is

promised; the husband, or wife, or parent, or brother, or sister, come in, and the new chain of actions is at once broken through all its links. Even in cases of incurable insanity, the frequent visits of relations tends to confirm perturbation, and add to distress—nay, oftentimes to change absolute tranquillity into perturbation, and happiness into misery.

I say it, then, with respect—but I am bound to say it with boldness—that both as it regards the classification of patients, and the visits of friends, the Commissioners under the Act of Insanity, with the most equivocally benevolent designs, have sometimes imposed tasks on the proprietors of lunatic establishments, vexatious to them and injurious to those who are under their care.

In thus asserting what I consider important fact, I have no interest, I have had no prompter. “My withers are unwrung.” I have never asked, never received favours from any men, or any set of men, and I have nothing to expect in life but the fair reward of integrity and industry.

There is one other particular which ought to be pointed out as objectionable in the economy of lunatic asylums—viz. that of showing off inmates, especially convalescents, and, at any rate, half conscious ones, as matters of boast, or for the sake of satisfying an idle curiosity. Never shall I forget the impression which was made upon my mind by perusing the following narrative, to be met with in Mr. Hill’s treatise. “The amiable daughter of a once respectable tradesman of this city, now dead,

became, at the age of twenty-three, a sufferer under the sthenic form of insanity. She was naturally of a sprightly disposition, endowed with great sensibility, an excellent understanding, and most affectionate heart: becoming very unmanageable, her relatives sent her to an extensive asylum in a neighbouring county; during a long residence she became convalescent, after a few well-marked lucid intervals, in which she grieved excessively on discovering her situation. One day two old school-fellows were accidentally viewing the receptacle of multiplied misery, with an attendant in waiting, as a matter of mere travelling curiosity, (which, it is proper to notice, is a very reprehensible practice,) not knowing she was there. Upon entering a common sitting room, the invalid was discovered sewing; when, lifting her eyes from her work, she fixed them most earnestly on the visitors, screamed, sprang from her chair, rushed into the arms of the foremost, and exclaimed, 'Ah my dear, dear S—, *you see me HERE!*' and at intervals screaming and sobbing, reiterated the words, adding, 'in this place, in this figure,' &c. As soon as her arms could be disengaged, she was removed to her own apartment, from whence she has scarce ever emerged, although upwards of ten years have succeeded the heart-rending scene."

I am happy, however, to observe that there is a growing disposition, both on the part of those who direct the conduct and economy of public hospitals, as well as those who superintend private establish-

ments, to prevent the indulgence of that unwarrantable curiosity which might lead to such dread events as the one just related. There was a time when Bethlem constituted one of the lions of London, and when country parties visited it just as they would a menagerie of wild beasts. Oh, what improvements have time, and an increasing sense of rectitude, and government enactments, effected in the economy of hospitals for, and in the management of, disordered intellect.

To return to our investigation respecting the expediency of visits from friends, we may say that, for the most part, these visits are principally to be apprehended in their consequences about the time of convalescence. In the melancholy recital just given, it will have been observed that the patient was nearly ready for departure from the house, when she was so cruelly remanded to her first estate ; had she seen these old friends during the time of her maniacal wanderings, she would probably, even had she recognized them, not heeded their intrusion. So in our establishment at Peckham, we are much more chary of relations' intercourse, when the patient has well nigh recovered, than when all consciousness and proper perception are suspended ; and many are the instances of patients returning to the house with a recurrence of sickness, from their having been taken out before the associations of health were sufficiently strong to hold together against the subjection to novel or newly revived excitement.

Against the universal application of this rule an exception has been made by a very powerful writer, on the ground that judicious interposition might, when the system was just opening to receive it, at once dispel the hallucination, and restore the wonted integrity of mind. I will extract the very affecting narration given by the writer alluded to in one of the volumes of Transactions, issued from the College of Physicians, both on account of the interesting nature of the relation, and for the purpose of proving that it is not by any means my wish to enforce a principle and practice without well weighing the arguments for and against. It must be recollect ed, that in the case now to be presented, the disorder itself was one which takes less firm, or rather less lasting hold, than most other species of insanity—and that the individual who conceived himself so happy as to have accomplished the object of his visit, joined affection, and skill, and medical knowledge, in an eminent degree. For obvious reasons I do not name the parties.

“ A lady, twenty-eight years of age, of good constitution, but susceptible mind, became affected with melancholy a few months after her second lying in; towards the end of her pregnancy, a frightful incident had occurred to a near relation, which affected her so deeply, that she often spent the night sleepless, sitting up in bed, thinking of her misfortune, and dreading that she should lose her reason after her confinement. Having nursed her child without

feeding it for three or four months, with much unnecessary anxiety and exertion, she grew thin and weak, complained of sinking in the stomach and aching in the legs, and experienced so much confusion of mind, that she could not arrange her domestic accounts; she became low spirited, she knew not why; she was advised to wean her child, took some light tonic and gentle laxative, and went down to the sea side, but at the end of a month she returned home, having derived little benefit from her absence; her spirits became gradually more depressed, and it was impossible to persuade her that she had not some fatal disease. One day it was cancer, another inflammation in the bowels, and to such a height did her apprehensions rise, that her husband was often brought home by some alarming message, and found her with a solemn air, and in a low whisper giving directions to her servants, whom she had assembled round her, what to say if she should expire before their master arrived; she now grew much worse, there was no longer any doubt about the nature of her complaint: she was seen by a physician of extensive experience in these diseases, and sent into the country; many weeks passed; sometimes she was better, sometimes worse, now accusing herself of the deepest depravity, and meditating schemes of self-destruction, then again convinced of the absurdity of her notions, and struggling against the load which for a short time every day weighed on her heart; in this way many weeks

passed : at length the disease came upon her with more violence than ever, and in her self-examination and condemnation she became quite ferocious.

“ She was now put under the care of an experienced attendant, separated entirely from her husband, children, and friends, placed in a neat cottage, surrounded by agreeable company (it was the finest season of the year,) and visited regularly by her physician.

“ For several weeks she manifested no improvement ; sometimes she was occupied with one notion, sometimes with another, but they were always of the most gloomy description ; at length it became her firm belief that she was to be executed for her crimes, in the most public and disgraceful way ; every noise she heard was that of the workmen erecting the scaffold ; every carriage the officers of justice assembling at the execution ; but what affected her most deeply was, that her infamy had occasioned the disgrace and death of her children and husband, and that his spirit haunted her. As soon as the evening closed, she would station herself at a window at the back of the cottage, and fix her eyes on a white post that could be seen through the dusk ; this was the ghost of her husband ; day and night he was whistling in her ears.

“ Several weeks passed in this way ; the daily reports varied, but announced nothing happy ; at length her husband became impatient, and begged to have an interview with her, thinking that the best way to convince her he was not dead, was to show

himself ; this was objected to ; he was told the general fact, that patients are more likely to recover when completely separated from their friends, that if she saw him, she would say it was not himself but his ghost ; but the husband was obstinate, and an interview was consented to. When he arrived at the cottage, he was told she had had a tolerable night, was rather more tranquil—but that there was no abatement of her gloomy notions. ‘ As soon as I entered the drawing-room, where she usually spent the day, (I copy his own statement which is now before me, and which he wrote down at the time of the occurrence) she ran into a corner, hid her face in her handkerchief, then turned round, looked me full in the face, one moment appearing delighted at the thought that I was alive, but immediately afterwards assuming a hideous expression of countenance, and screaming out that I was dead and come to haunt her. This was exactly what Dr. —— had anticipated, and for some minutes I thought all was lost.

“ Finding that persuasion and argument only irritated and confirmed her in her belief, I desisted, and tried to draw off her attention to other subjects ; it was some time since she had seen either me or her children ; I put her arm under mine, took her into the garden, and began to relate what had occurred to me and to them since we parted ; this excited her attention, she soon became interested, and I entered with the utmost minuteness, and circumstantially into the affairs of the nursery, her

home, and her friends. I now felt that I was gaining ground, and when I thought I had complete possession of her mind, I ventured to ask, in a joking manner, whether I was not very communicative for a ghost; she laughed; I immediately drew her from the subject, and again engaged her attention with her children and her friends. The plan succeeded beyond my hope; I dined, spent the evening with her, and left her at night perfectly herself again."

"He went the next morning in a state of intense anxiety to know whether his success had been permanent, but her appearance at the window with a cheerful countenance, soon relieved his apprehensions; while he was there, Dr. —— came in; he went up stairs without knowing the effect of the interview, and came down saying, "It looks like magic." With a view of confirming her recovery, she was ordered to the sea side to bathe; as soon as the day of her departure was fixed, she began to droop again, the evening before it was very low, and on the morning of her setting off was as bad as ever; this state continued for several weeks, in spite of sea air and bathing, and ceased as suddenly as it had done before, apparently in consequence of interviews with friends, calculated to remove the apprehensions by which her mind was haunted. She has since then continued perfectly well, and has had another child, without the slightest threatening of her former malady."

I have given the whole of the above detail, partly

from motives already mentioned, and partly because the detail itself is very interesting, as a history of mental disorder; but although presented to the world in vindication of the practice of seeing relations under particular circumstances, I am disposed to doubt whether the cure would not have been effected quite as speedily, perhaps more so, without any intervention at all: certain it is, to my conception, that the altogether of the case by no means establishes the principle or justifies the inference which its able narrator is desirous to draw from it.

“There is a stage (he says) approaching convalescence, in which the bodily disease is loosening its hold over the mental faculties, and in which the latter are capable of being drawn out of the former by judicious appeals to the mind.” But I would repeat, that the attempt, even when science, and feeling, and judgment are exercised, as was conspicuously the case in the instance before us, is more likely to prove unavailable than otherwise—and that the danger of throwing back the current of feeling into its morbid course, is, in most cases, imminent. “None, however, ought to meddle with these particulars, who have not discretion and genius into the bargain.”

Coercion.—There are some enthusiasts among us, who imagine that improvements in regard to scholastic discipline may be carried so far as to supersede altogether even the mildest plans of punishment; so I verily believe did the more sanguine among those statesmen, who but a few years back were so

laudably engaged in the investigation of insanity, and in schemes for the better regulation of insane establishments, conceive that an appeal to the maniac's feeling would prevent altogether the necessity of harsher treatment. Then again, some of our medical reformists lent themselves to the fostering of this false notion, and one of them, I believe, was considerably influenced in his condemnation of mad-houses, by the opportunity it afforded him of anti-thetical and pointed alliteration. "Stripes and straight waistcoats"—"Mausolea of mind"—and such like prettinesses figured in his pages, with effective impression, upon those who, like himself, were benevolent theorists, but knew no more of the practical requirements of mental derangement, than a lad who may have been half a year behind the counter of a dispensing shop ; and who, of course, in his own estimation, is as fully competent to judge of medical agents as the best of us.

Human nature is human nature still, madness is still madness ; and although the utmost gratitude is due to our greatly improved aristocracy of the present day, for foregoing their own immediate gratification, and giving their time and their talents to an amelioration of the condition of insane sufferers, I must say, that in some instances too little deference was paid to the representations and statements of those individuals, who only could speak with authority, because they only could speak from experience.

Do you, then, my reader will ask me, wish to recur to the old system of severity in the manage-

ment of lunatics ? I hope what I have already had occasion to advance, and what I shall afterwards state, will exonerate me by all the well-judging from such imputation ; I do, moreover, most readily concede, that houses for the restoration of reason were often falsely so designated, and that legislative interposition has conducted to real, and, I hope, lasting improvement in their economy. But to say that restraint and "*in terrorem*" measures are not frequently called for, largely and loudly, by mad-house inmates, were to prove ourselves either absolutely ignorant of the nature of mental aberration, or wilfully obstinate in our attachment to Utopian schemes.

These measures, however, ought to be had recourse to, both with discrimination and principle ; no keepers should for a moment be indulged in the conception or execution of any scheme which might save them trouble at the expense of the patients' feelings. Both medical, and other superintendents, ought to be vigilantly observant of any tendency to these most reprehensible practices—and all restraint, beyond that which should be instituted for the patients' own welfare, or to prevent injury being inflicted on those about him, is manifestly criminal.

Straight waistcoats, even in private houses, prove occasionally instruments of the greatest mercy, for they effect more than several individuals could accomplish, with all the power that they could exercise ; and the memory of its employment, with the fear of its repetition, will, in many cases, supersede

the necessity of its repetition. Handcuffs, even while the patient is at large, that is, walking about the grounds at his pleasure, are often necessary preventives of mischief. Foot-locks, although among the most unseemly modes of confinement and restraint, are not seldom the least annoying to the sufferer. Sometimes it is necessary to confine one arm, sometimes both; occasionally the legs, also, require to be restrained, and we have chairs in the Peckham establishment which admirably answer these several requisites, while they keep the patient in an upright posture, and are not open to some other objections that apply themselves to the waist-coat confinement.

To describe, however, these several modes of necessary restriction, were to be idly and unprofitably engaged, and I shall conclude the present division of my treatise by reiterating what I have above intimated, that necessity, and not the convenience, of those about the insane, ought to be the sole instigator, and the simple motive for the adoption of any of them. Strictly corporal punishments, that is, "stripes and blows," I hope are now, throughout the whole country, "obsolete things."

CHAPTER IX.

SUICIDE.

A VERY good old lady, who was a friend and relation of mine, but a good disciple of the old school, which teaches the doctrine of demoniac possession, used to say, she verily believed that the devil himself appeared in person, and issued his dreadful commands to the self-murderer. I cannot say that my opinion quite coalesces with my late friend, but that there are the strangest inconsistencies in suicide no one can, for a moment, question. You will often find the deed of self-destruction perpetrated by an individual who, by the general tenor of his conduct, seems not only afraid to die, but desirous to live, even for the sake of life ;* at times, the act of suicide is done as if by a sudden impulse, and judging from all you see and hear, it would seem likely, that had the dread moment been suffered to pass by, there would have been no repetition of the attempt ; at other times, days, and weeks, and years, are spent, and no contrivances left unessayed in the contem-

* Suicides, says a pointed writer, rush into the arms of death as if to shield them from the terrors of his countenance.

plation of the act. The only instance of self-destruction that has occurred within the walls of Peckham establishment, was effected by a female, who sat ruminating on the desire, and which desire being suspected, she was more than commonly watched, but upon the nurse leaving her only for a few minutes, she made her way immediately to an exceedingly small window on the stair-case, and literally squeezed herself out of it.

Another attempt, I recollect, was well nigh succeeding, and here an equally determinate resolution was displayed. The individual was deprived of the use of his arms and hands, by a species of handcuff and belt, which are employed in the establishment for this purpose; with this restriction he was permitted to walk about, and he contrived, during the temporary absence of the keeper, to fill his mouth with stones, which, lying upon the ground, with his mouth he took from the garden walks, and I believe from a wall that had some loose fragments of brick about it. In the endeavour to swallow these he failed, and they were forced down into his stomach, not without very considerable difficulty; and I shall never forget the expressions which the combination of mental and physical suffering drew from him during the process. Half contrite, and half despairing, wishing to die, but afraid of death, and withal, enduring an intensity of bodily pain, he exclaimed, "I have now found out the hell that divines talk of!" The circumstance, however, proved in the event a happy one for him; while the ulcer-

tions that the stones had produced were healing, he became rational, his mind became impressed with the awful concerns of futurity, and he left the house happy in religious persuasion, and completely cured of his mental disorder.

But I am about being led away from the main intention of my present paper, which is to enquire whether the frequency of suicide might not be considerably prevented, were a little more pains taken to ascertain the condition of mind under which the purpose had been effected, and, in cases where the proof was complete, contriving some sort of posthumous punishment—not burying in cross roads, certainly—as a warning to others.

I am aware that the greatest difficulty would attend the inquisition; I feel fully the force of the objection, that it is almost impossible to know the mental state of others from our own feelings; I appreciate the objection founded on the painful circumstances under which the survivors would be placed by any stigma of the kind now referred to—but still there are acts which occasionally speak so loudly for themselves, on the score of motives, and, moreover, we are aware of so many instances in which suicide is only prevented by a consideration of consequences, that a little more severity than is at present brought into act, might, it is presumable, much diminish their number; and on this account the severity would be justified, as, in the long run, the sources of misery to survivors would be materially lessened.

We have, indeed, examples which speak forcibly and unequivocally to the point of prevention. Dr. Burrows speaks of a particular district, I think on the Continent, where, in the army, suicide actually became an epidemic disease; the commander, finding that he lost some of his best soldiers by this unprofitable warfare, ordered the next half dozen who should commit the act to be hung on some neighbouring trees, and exposed to the gaze of their former compeers. The remedy completely succeeded, and the soldiers immediately ceased to play the game of killing themselves. I say the soldiers, but I believe, upon recollection, that the epidemic, although among the military, was not confined to them.

In all cases of suicide, however, which should be of an equivocal or doubtful nature, it were the height of cruelty and injustice, both to the memory of the departed and the feelings of the surviving relations, not to lean to the merciful side. Some time since, it will be in the recollection of most readers, we lost an individual of eminence in the legal profession, who, it was said, committed suicide under the apprehension that his intellects would not long hold out the great trials he put them to. Now in this case a very rigid judge might condemn the act, under the conviction that insanity could not apply to a case of merely anticipated alienation. But no one can say, with any thing like certainty, what measure of voluntary resistance to the temptation was present at the moment of the act—and

there is no one, therefore, who, even if he consider the perpetrator of the deed a responsible agent, ought to condemn in an unqualified manner, or under the feeling of certainty that his condemnation was well founded.

Instances like these, whether occurring among the great or the small, the rich or the poor, the learned or unlearned, ought to be registered as cases of irresistible suicide, and I would make no difference in reference to different circumstances and situations of life, except what should be founded on this particular, viz. that where much study, or much brain exercise of any kind, had been the lot of the suicide, the act itself would lay still greater claim to be considered as an act of insanity: always, too, ought we to recollect that an error on the other side, that of looking on self-destruction indiscriminately as an immoral act, argues not only the reception of a superstitious creed, but an ignorance of all the physiological laws by which organization is bound to intellect.

There are some instances of self-destruction, respecting which the most rigid and severe would pause before they pass their sweeping condemnation of cowardice and crime: often has it been stated to me by individuals who have been forcibly prevented from the act, and who have returned to their senses, that they felt an impression on their minds, absolutely convincing them that they must die by their own hands; and we hear of one individual, who cut his throat under the persuasion that devils

were lodged in his inside, and that he was ordered to make a way for their exit. Who would pass condemnation here? In the spirit of my good relative's creed, you might suppose the personification of all evil to have a hand in these dreadful affairs; but any rate, even if punishment in the other world be awarded to acts committed under the circumstances supposed, though our belief would then be of the most gloomy order, our commiseration of the poor sufferer's fate, no belief, one should think, could prevent; and it is a curious fact, that some disciples of the most abhorrent doctrines, are the mildest and most humane in their feelings and conduct.

But if the greater number of cases in which life has been thus shortened by self-murder, are susceptible of explanation and excuse, on the score of irrationality or false persuasion, what shall we say to a great many in which passion and cowardice, and dreadful venture as to future reckonings, have seemed solely and purely to inspire the deed?

On the last day that I was at Dartford, I saw a man lying dead, and by his side was a paper to this effect—I can no longer endure poverty and debt, and this is the way I rid myself of them. Had I been one of the jury on the inquest, I could not conscientiously have subscribed to this being a case of insanity. Here is a man healthy and powerful, and in the prime of life, merely because he is under the temporary embarrassment of debt and pecuniary difficulty, plunges his poor wife into still greater difficulty, adds to that difficulty anguish of

mind, leaves his progeny to the precarious provision of others, in a word, brings upon his own memory disgrace, and disgrace and poverty upon the members of his family, instead of rousing himself from the depression into which he had fallen, and exerting his energies to meet and overcome his difficulties.

Mere ennui and distaste of existence has been considered, according to my conception, too indiscriminately and too laxly as a disease; and suicide vindicated, or at the best excused, as being one of the manifestations of such disordered state. Under the head of *tedium vitæ*, Dr. Darwin relates the case of a gentleman who coolly announced to a friend, that life, in his opinion, afforded no other enjoyment than a ride on horseback in the morning; a warm parlour in the afternoon, and a pack of cards in the evening; and, as he had even become tired of these, he intended to kill himself the next day; he was persuaded to have an issue on the top of his head, and during the process of its healing he condescended to endure life, but afterwards shot himself. Instead of an issue on the top of his head, some of our readers will probably think he ought to have had a birch applied to his back; at any rate, something more mental and moral than this same issue should have been contrived as a preventive, and the verdict insanity, which was most likely to have been given, in the event of judicial investigation, could scarcely with propriety apply.

It is my wish, on all occasions, to abstain from

mixing religious considerations with those topics that have a physiological, rather than a moral bearing with the subject which it is more legitimately the object of these pages to dwell upon ; but I cannot refrain from saying that the very terms in which the suicide just spoken of announced his feelings of the *tedium vitae*, manifested such a disregard of the accountability of existence, and such a cold-blooded selfishness, as to the effect upon connexions, which self-murder necessarily implies, that on these grounds condemnation ought to have been passed upon the deed, assuming the sanity of the individual. When, as it has but too frequently occurred to me to witness, a person who, from manifestly morbid conditions of the sentient system, from hereditary taint, from ruined fortune, or from family circumstances of an adverse nature, destroys himself, the charge of cowardice or of selfishness cannot, in all cases, be brought with propriety; since it is not so much the mental perturbation, as the consequent brain disorder, that may have been the proximate cause of the act ; but when, as in the instance adduced, an individual gives back, as the cant of infidelity has it, the boon which he has received from his Maker, viz. his life—and by so doing entails distress upon his relatives—to say nothing about himself, he violates every principle that ought to actuate a being linked to society, as all must more or less be; and demonstrates, in the most lamentable way, both selfish feeling and cowardly motive.

There is another circumstance connecting itself with self-destruction, which takes away almost all doubt on the score of irresponsibility. Some years since, I knew a youth of headstrong passions, and unbridled lust; his courses caused an estrangement between himself and father; he became almost a ruined individual, and resorted to the gaming-house in order to recruit his substance; the expedient failed him, he staked, and lost all that he had—immediately loaded his pistol, and blew out his brains. Here was passion, if you please, but there was no insanity; he preferred to venture the dread hazard of futurity, rather than submit to the reproaches of his friends, and the contumely of the world. With what different feelings do we ponder over the suicidal act of poor —; no, I will not mention his name, who, rich in imagination, grand in conception, powerful in mind, and young in life, destroyed himself under the impression that poverty was before him, and the workhouse his destiny. In this case misconception, not passion, prompted the act. It was a case that unequivocally called for the verdict of insanity.

These intimations may, and probably do, to many readers, appear mighty common-place; but should they be the means of giving a less common-place character to our judicial investigations, the prosing nature of the remarks may find some excuse in the importance of the subject which has elicited them. Certain it is, that no inquisition at all would be much preferable to the slovenly and mere formal way in which

inquiries as to sanity or insanity are now conducted ; and certain, moreover, it is, that in order to form a correct judgment on the questions which these awful events give rise to, physiology and medicine ought to lend their assistance on the bearings of the separate and several cases.

CHAPTER X.

MORAL MANAGEMENT OF NERVOUS DISORDERS.

A **COMPREHENSIVE** this—a difficult theme—and I wish it were in my power to do it full justice. There is scarcely a medical man who has been at all familiar with the physiognomy of disease, that is not aware of the vast mutation the nervous system is subject to, without such change being manifest to any but a scrutinizing inspection. Anatomy will not do, physiology will not do, abstractedly; even what is called morbid anatomy often fails us, and we are left to judge and to practise, not, in a proper sense of the word, empirically, but certainly upon different principles from those which regulate our endeavours to reduce inflammation, or cure dropsy.

So intimately, indeed, is the sentient organization united and bound up with other parts of the frame, that even in those affections which seem the least of any allied to purely nervous malady, the manner of a medical man is, occasionally, quite as efficient as his matter; and even the lancet itself may be employed with more or less success, according to the

confidence of the patient in the skill of the physician.

We may all of us occasionally receive instruction from the wiles and deceptions of quackery. We may be further taught a useful lesson by the success of medical systems. When it is seen that positive benefit attends the practice of diametrically opposite schools, when we perceive that one code of doctrine after another has its rise, its acme, and decline; and that during the flourishing period of one of them, successful cases out of number shall be cited by their devotees and defenders, who may be men of honour and judgment, we cannot refuse subscription to the belief, that faith in the prescriber powerfully assists the effect of the prescription; nor, in all cases, is it necessary that conscious or positive faith be in exercise. We often believe and feel, in despite of conviction, and are impressed, while we resist impression.

Some little time since, when animal magnetism was more in vogue than it is at present, a thorough and avowed sceptic was told by an operator, that although he would be at a considerable distance from the manipulation on a particular day, and at a certain time of that day, he should feel sufficient of magnetic influence to occasion a change in his creed respecting it! he did feel; he was acted upon at the specific time mentioned. Now, said he to the magnetizer, on his return to town, I cannot refuse to admit that the science of magnetism has a foundation in truth; the magnetizer, for a moment off his guard, inquired

into the reason of his altered faith, and it turned out, that so far from there having been any process employed, the professor of the art had entirely forgotten his promise, or rather his threat. So that when I am told of the difference of this system, or of that drug from another, inasmuch as faith in its efficacy is not necessary to insure its effect, I am not convinced by such averment that imagination or belief, or something approaching to either, may not have assisted in procuring its benefits to the patient.

Of all these things the conscientious and principled physician may take advantage. If there be efficacy in soothing conduct, such conduct may be adopted without any dereliction of honour or principle; if harshness hurts, it is not necessary to say that there is an impolicy, as well as cruelty, in its adoption.

I have thus prefaced what I am about to advance on the head of moral treatment, because I think, for the most part, we are too much inclined to judge of remedies in the abstract, and not sufficiently to take into account the intricate windings, the irregular workings, and at all times the varied sensibility in the nerves of our respective patients. We practise too *nosologically*—we find out names, and record symptoms, and think of the antidotes to these symptoms, as a chemist thinks of neutralizing an acid, or oxydating a metal. We forget that we are operating upon life as well as matter.

Now in nervous derangements, more specifically and properly so, this common-place method of contriving remedy is especially to be avoided; for here

we rather infer than witness, rather conclude from data, than reason from evidence. In disturbed or deranged function, the proof of the derangement is of a different kind from what it is when structure is more visibly or tangibly implicated. In cases of inflammation there is a manifest change in the action of the circulating powers, and although our sentiments may differ in respect to the mode in which these changes are induced; that there they are, is self-evident. In like manner we can perceive the tumefaction of a limb in instances of morbid growth, but when this limb is deprived of its locomotive power, in other words, paralyzed, neither the eye of the observer, nor the knife of the dissector, may be able to detect the something which has occasioned the change.

I have already intimated that some of our pathologists seem scarcely disposed to recognize any derangement that may not implicate the vascular as well as the sentient system, and some species of secondary change must indeed, almost of necessity, have place, seeing that one part of the living body is so intimately connected with another; but however difficult the conception or explication of the fact, fact it is, that independently of the blood-vessels—
independently of the assimilating organs—
independently of the digestive processes, the brain and nerves may be brought into a condition of morbid being, occasioning an irregularity in feeling and function, which is properly entitled to the distinctive appellation of nervous, and which demands more

especially that moral should be combined with medical management.

What a different condition from that of ordinary excitability must we conceive to have place in the sentient organization, when, as in a case related by Dr. Haslam, a female dreadfully mangled her jaw by a piece of glass, in an ineffectual attempt at suicide, and according to her own announcement, was not sensible of pain during the whole process ; and such manifestations of insusceptibility, more or less marked, are familiar to all who are about deranged people. Even in cases where insanity is not admitted, we often find instances of religious or political enthusiasm absorbing the faculties in such measure, that inflictions of the most violent kind are endured without a murmur, and apparently without perception.

“ Perhaps,” says an eloquent writer, “ no combination of affections could be feigned, which cannot be matched in faithful medical reports, and the reality exceeds whatever the most fertile fancy could invent in insensibility on the one hand, and readiness to be affected on the other, in violence, in the whimsical manner in which symptoms are grouped, and in the rapid changes from one state to another. In this last respect, what is fabled in romance and masques, concerning the power of the enchanter’s rod, to induce in a moment the stiffness of a statue, or to restore the spell-bound person to motion, is much exceeded in nature, and it is possible that fiction took the hint from this species of reality, since it always must borrow from one species of reality or another.

That the dropping of a hair-pin on the floor should make a person start from her seat, and fix her in a preternatural posture, by occasioning preternatural fixed contractions, and relaxations equally preternatural, till she sink into insensibility, from which she awakes into vehement delirium, is hardly credible to those who are conversant only with the healthy, and the sorts of sickness to which the robust are subject.

On comparing an individual liable to these varieties of being to the engineer, who stands unmoved amid the thunder of a battery, to the seaman who maintains his footing upon the deck or ropes of his vessel, reeling under the shock of the elements, or to the Indian who exhibits the signs, and probably feels the throb of intense delight, while the flames are preying upon his flesh, how astonishing do we find the range of human susceptibility to the effects of the powers by which we are surrounded!"

Yes, and what is still more astonishing, are the rapid transitions from shrinking sensibility to solid firmness; from inaptitude and inaction to liveliness and decision; and that, not so much from the difference of the exciting agents, or from the nature of the individual, as from the particular circumstances under which that individual may be placed. I knew a young lady who owed her death to unnecessary trepidation occasioned by fire; this very female had, under previous circumstances calculated much more to excite alarm, evinced the greatest firmness and most effective resolution. Soldiers who expose them-

selves to the battle's front, without apparent consciousness that any danger can in any shape appal their firm minds, have been known to linger on the brink of a cold bath, fearful of the plunge; and females, under the circumstances supposed in the commencing chapter of the present treatise, will be suddenly revolutionized from the imbecility of listlessness to the heroism of a mother.

To cite instances *ad libitum* from ancient records, or modern writings illustrating these points, were to fill volumes; but it is the fact only about which we are at present interested, and the fact may teach us two important lessons:—first, the inefficiency of that pathology and practice which should be regulated upon no other principles than that of vascular irritation; and secondly, it ought to keep us constantly alive to the remarkable subordination of the physical to the mental susceptibility of the body—a principle in medicine, of which I reiterate my conviction that we are too disposed insufficiently to appreciate. I have already also intimated, that if it were nothing but the importance which the knowledge and attention, now adverted to, would teach of manner in the practice of medicine, that itself, in its application, would be found of no mean moment. We do not, in these cases, assume a virtue which we have not, but we lawfully act upon the susceptibility of our patients towards assisting, by every means in our power, their restoration to health.

Even the case which was bandied about some one

or two years since, had nothing in it either wrong or ridiculous, except in the ascription of the effect to miraculous interposition, and if others can be cured in the same way, I see no objection to the nature of the remedy; for my own part, I am sure of this, that could I infuse confidence enough into my patients to cause them to obey my mandates, I would rather effect cures in this manner of commanding the sick to be whole, than to go through the more regular but more tardy method of prescribing medicinals.

I know no more instructive experiments, either in ancient or modern writings, than those furnished us by Dr. Haygarth, which were instituted with a view to expose a gross and palpable piece of quackery that had its reign, but is now gone to the Capulets' vault; but their instructiveness extends further than the exposure of imposition, and they go to prove what dolts we are if we do not take the good from the evil of empiricism, and make it subservient to our legitimate endeavours of imparting good.

Dr. Haygarth very properly and sensibly maintained, that we might even admit all the efficacy which the metallic tractors laid claim to, without allowing that they had any virtue in and of themselves; and in the experiments to which I have referred, he employed pieces of stick and iron, while the patients supposed themselves under the influence of the genuine tractors. Mr. Smith, of the Bristol Infirmary, a man of unquestionable veracity and credit,

was the principal performer, and one of the most remarkable cases I will here transcribe from another publication of my own.

“Edmund Williams,” says Mr. Smith, “applied to me for an obstinate affection of the urinary organs (*stillicidium urinæ*.) The man was a poor feeble subject, and appeared to be impressed with the idea that he should never recover, that nothing would be of service to him, but he was willing to try every thing. (Here, by the way, I may remark that we have an instance of that semi-kind of faith to which I have referred, as sufficient to impress the imagination.) In one minute after the points of the wooden tractors had been drawn in various directions about the pelvis, he said, ‘I begin to feel something jumping in my inside,’ and in three minutes and a half the determination of the blood to the capillary vessels of the skin was evident, (vascular, subsequent to nervous excitation) giving him a sensation of warmth to which he had been long a stranger. On the 27th he reported that his hips had been unusually comfortable and warm: this induced me to persevere, especially as the patient himself had become less sceptical as to the powers of the tractors. The gentleman who assisted me having borrowed the pieces of stick, I was obliged to use two penny nails, which had before been used on a similar occasion. These were disguised with red sealing-wax, and had the dignified appellation on this account of *rouge et noir*. In fact, it was often necessary to play the part of a necromancer,

to describe circles, squares, triangles, and half the figures of geometry, upon the part affected, with the small ends of our feigned tractors. During all this time we conversed, in the patient's hearing, upon the wonderful discoveries of Franklin and Galvani, laying much stress upon the power of metallic points attracting even lightning, and conveying it to the earth harmless. To a more curious farce I never was witness: we were almost afraid to look each other in the face, lest an involuntary laugh should remove the mask from our countenance and dispel the charm. But to return to my patient. In one minute he felt 'a smarting in his loins, and warmth of the skin;' in two 'heat increased,' in four the operation ceased, when he said 'the skin is very warm;' a bystander asked if he thought himself mended? He replied, he would soon answer that question, and upon sitting down, suddenly exclaimed, 'Yes, I am better.' It was demanded how he knew it? 'When I used to sit down,' he replied, 'There was always a spirt of water thrown from me, but now I can prevent it.' The experiment was two or three times repeated, and with the same result; in fact the patient actually regained the power of retention in a great measure afterwards."

On this case the reporter of it makes the following reflections. "It may be asked, what physical alteration could so suddenly have taken place in the muscular fibres of the sphincter of the bladder, that from a state of pallid relaxation, they should be again en-

dowed with the power of performing their office? Permit me, in my turn, to ask the enquirer, what is the primary cause of the purple blush which instantly overspreads the cheek of the guilty, (and of the not guilty too) when accused? Should it be answered, because the vessels are suddenly distended with blood, that will be readily granted as the remote cause, but it is the power which directed that operation that I wish to be demonstrated. We shall be equally involved in the same dilemma, but the facts being admitted, our inability to account for them signifies nothing."

Such cases as these, then, let me repeat again and again, lead to more important inferences than those for which the experiments were mainly instituted; they are principally to be valued in the use that may be made of them in regular and legitimate practice; they serve to evidence *that* very essential principle in the theory of living actions—that mental stimuli are by no means limited in their operation to the sentient organization and faculties; but that they display an agency decided and demonstrative upon every the minutest fibre, entering into the composition of the body, and are, therefore, not only useful in merely nervous ailment, but in those sicknesses which, commencing in the nerves, become complicated and *embodied* into other diseases to which nosological names have been applied at the pleasure of the nosographer.

"It is worthy of observation," says Dr. Cogan, who has written well on the passions, "that in every

powerful exertion of the imagination some change takes place in the body, corresponding with its nature. In a keen appetite, upon the thoughts of some favourite viand, the salivary glands are stimulated to a secretion of saliva, as preparatory to deglutition. We feel ourselves firm, collected, elevated, upon the timely representation of the firm, heroic conduct of others. The blood thrills in our veins, and the skin corrugates at the description of any thing peculiarly (particularly) horrible; and under the strong impression of fictitious danger, the attitude of our bodies attempts to evade it. Full confidence in the mystic power of another, places the whole system in a situation most favourable to the effects which the object of his confidence undertakes to produce. This will explain much of what is real in the pretensions of magnetizers, and the exaggerating disposition of both operator and patient will explain the rest."

I am not desirous to impress upon my readers, that the excitants above alluded to, in cases of nervous and mental derangement, are of easy application or universal effect. My intention is limited to that of urging the necessity of some more general and enlarged views than the mere dealers in drugs take of sentient disorder. A great deal still remains, after all that may be written, for the exercise of individual judgment. We must take pains to study the natural temperament and healthy tastes of those who come under our cognizance for nervous ailments; we must learn whe-

ther the principle of association was so alive as to be easily excited when the patient was himself; and, by the way, the associate principle is one of the most powerful over the mental functions and feelings, and one which demands to be watched over, and regulated according to circumstances, with more assiduity than almost any other, since, as it has been well observed, feelings which have accompanied ideas at different times, have prodigious power in bringing these ideas together. Who has not leaped with joy at the first sight of the scenes of his childhood, more especially if this childhood had been passed happily? and who is so dull in feeling or imagination, as not to have a whole series of associate actions set going by the presentation of one of its links to his senses? Things by no means agreeable in themselves, will not only prove so in the recollections they excite, but those recollections will often prove of the most powerful kind in changing the mental condition from gloom to liveliness, and from liveliness to the deepest gloom, as is exemplified in the *Maladie de pays* of the Swiss—a disorder created and cured as if by enchantment—created by the smallest circumstance that shall remind the individual of the mountains and valleys he has left behind him, and cured by the permission to revisit the scenes of infancy and youth.

Let me again and again protest against wishing to represent mental stimuli of easy management, and of general success. At times you fail most in at-

tempting the attack upon points which, *a priori*, seem to promise the most success, and mere accident will often accomplish for you and your patient what months of judicious trials will be unequal to. I remember a patient of mine, in Buckinghamshire, who having fallen into a nervous or hypochondriac state, yielded to the wishes of an intimate friend, that he would take a journey with him into a distant part of the country, and expose himself to scenes and circumstances of former enjoyment. He complied, as I have stated, with the desire of his companion and other friends; but, still, wherever he went, or whatever he saw, was alike indifferent to him. An extinguisher was on his perceptions; he saw, but he did not feel. The individual who travelled with him was about to return to Aylesbury with his melancholy companion, when, on entering a town in the west of England, a sudden shower of rain unexpectedly overtook them. A man on horseback, who was riding in the same direction, had so grotesquely accoutred himself, in the hurry of guarding against a thorough wetting, that the melancholic of whom we are speaking burst into a violent and loud laugh; from that moment he was a well man, and returned to his friends with a countenance cheerful and a mind unburthened. Well might the French writer, whom I have quoted in a previous chapter, talk of an *atome déplacé*, when contemplating such occurrences as these; and well may we pause before we can commend any plan of mental or physical

medicinals as of facile contrivance or unvaried success.

To cheat the mental or nervous sufferer into health is always allowable, when it can be accomplished ; and when the charm is found to work, it should be pursued with perseverance, and at the same time with caution. I have already said, that it will be found of much importance to ascertain constitutional susceptibilities. “In a military maniac,” says a modern author, “I once witnessed the notes of a shrill pipe, managed with some address, first awaken the attention, then occasion interest, as was obvious by his animated looks, and beating time ; at length, by varying the air according to the observed effects, produce the most pleasing sensations. *It at length brought back some very impressive recollections, created entirely new trains of thought*, and seemed to correct the errors of intellect. Though he had not left his bed for weeks, nor spoken a single word during that time, and had been supported entirely by force, he now arose, dressed himself, and without any other remedy but gentle tonics, returned to his former habits of neatness and rationality, advancing gradually to perfect recovery.”

It is of great moment to recollect, that the *ars celare artem* principle must be carefully acted upon in our endeavours to restore and reinstate proper feeling and correct perception. The deranged are, for the most part, exceedingly sensitive on certain points of honour ; and if they ascertain that you are

acting with secret design, they will shut up their senses against your experiments. I have no doubt that the military gentleman just alluded to would have been dead to all the pleasing impressions of music, had he been aware that the performer was playing *at* him, as well as for him ; and it is these niceties that make discretion, and good feeling, and penetrating habits such necessary qualifications in those who have to superintend the management of the nervous invalid or curable lunatic, qualifications which were evinced in an extensive measure, and exercised with the happiest effect, in the following instance, which, in all its bearings and particulars, is so pregnant with interest, as to tempt me to give it at length, although I have already transcribed it for two publications, in which it appears.

The great beauty of this narrative consists in its entire opposition to that common-place manner which is still too much adopted, of opposing reason or ridicule to firm conviction ; and in showing that even the fulfilment of predictions is no proof that the prediction was well founded, since the conception itself may come to occasion the circumstance anticipated. The death of the late Lord Littleton flourished away in books that were very improperly placed in the hands of young persons some few years since, for the purpose of proving a vindictive providence, and in this way frightening the imagination ; it is now, however, understood that there was a great deal of pious fraud employed in the getting up of the tragedy: but even allowing that it took

place precisely under the circumstances, and at the moment alleged, it proves nothing beyond the influence which the imagination, forcibly operated on, is capable of effecting. But to our narrative.

“A student of Jena, about sixteen years of age, having a weak and irritable nervous frame, but in other respects healthy, left his apartment during twilight, and suddenly returned with a pale dismal countenance, assuring his companion that he was doomed to die in thirty-six hours, or at nine o’clock in the morning of the second day. This sudden change of a cheerful young mind naturally alarmed his friend, but no explanation was given of its cause; every attempt at ridiculing this whimsical notion was fruitless, and he persisted in asserting that his death was certain and inevitable. A numerous circle of his fellow students soon assembled, with a view to dispel these gloomy ideas, and to convince him of his folly by arguments, satire, and mirth; he remained, however, unshaken in his strange conviction, being apparently inanimate in their company, and expressing no indignation at the frolics and witticisms applied to his peculiar situation. Nevertheless, it was conjectured that a calm repose during the night would produce a more favourable change in his fancy; but sleep was banished, and the approaching dissolution engrossed his attention during the nocturnal hours. Early next morning he sent for Professor Hufeland, who found him engaged in making arrangements for his burial; taking an affectionate leave of his friends,

and on the point of concluding a letter to his father, in which he announced the fatal catastrophe that was speedily to happen. After examining his condition of mind and body, the Professor could discover no remarkable deviation from his usual state of health, except a small contracted pulse, pale countenance, dull and drowsy eyes, and cold extremities ; these symptoms, however, sufficiently indicated a general spasmodic action of the nervous system, which also exerted an influence over the mental faculty. The most serious reasoning on the subject, and all the philosophical and medical eloquence of Dr. Hufeland, had not the desired effect ; and though the student admitted there might not be any ostensible cause of death discoverable, yet this very circumstance was peculiar to his case, and such was his inexorable destiny, that he must die next morning without any morbid symptoms. In this dilemma, Dr. Hufeland proposed to treat him as a patient. Politeness induced the latter to accept of such offer, but he assured the physician that medicines would not operate. As no time was to be lost, there being only twenty-four hours left for his life, Dr. Hufeland deemed it proper to direct such remedies as prove powerful excitants, in order to rouse the vital energy of his patient, and to relieve him from his captivated fancy ; hence, he prescribed strong emetics and other remedies, and ordered blisters to be applied to both calves of his legs. Quietly submitting to the Doctor's treatment, he observed, that his body being already half a corpse, all

means of recovering him would be vain. Indeed, Dr. Hufeland, on repeating his visit in the evening, was not a little surprised to learn that the emetic had but very little operated, and that the blisters had not even reddened the skin. The case became more serious, and the supposed victim of death began to triumph over the incredulity of the Professor and his friends. Thus circumstanced, Dr. Hufeland perceived how deeply and destructively that mental spasm must have operated on the body to produce a degree of insensibility, from which the worst consequences might be apprehended. All enquiries as to the origin of this singular belief had hitherto been unsuccessful. Now only he disclosed the secret to one of his intimate friends, namely, that on the preceding evening he had met with a white figure in the passage which nodded to him, and in the same moment, he heard a voice exclaiming, 'the day after to-morrow, at nine in the morning, thou shalt die.' He continued to settle his domestic affairs, made his will, minutely appointed his funeral, and even desired his friends to send for a clergyman, which request, however, was counteracted;—night appeared, and he began to compute the hours he had to live till the ominous next morning. His anxiety evidently increased with the striking of every clock within hearing. Dr. Hufeland was not without apprehension, when he recollects instances in which mere imagination had produced melancholy effects; but as every thing depended upon procrastinating or retarding that hour, in which the event

was predicted, and on appeasing the tempest of a perturbed imagination, till reason had again obtained the ascendancy, he resolved upon the following expedient:—having a complaisant patient, who refused not to take the remedies prescribed for him, (because he seemed conscious of the superior agency of his mind, over that of his body,) Dr. Hufeland had recourse to laudanum, combined with extract of henbane; twenty drops of the former, and two grains of the latter were given to the youth, with such effect, that he fell into a profound sleep, from which he did not awake till eleven the next morning. Thus the prognosticated fatal hour elapsed, and the friends waiting to welcome the bashful patient, who had agreeably disappointed them, turned the whole affair into ridicule. The first question, however, after recovering from his artificial sleep was, “What is the hour of the morning?” On being informed, that his presages had not been verified by experience, he assured the company, that all these transactions appeared to him as a dream. After that time, he long enjoyed a good state of health, and was completely cured of a morbid imagination.”

Although it is very seldom the case that any impression can be made on a morbid fancy by reason or ridicule, you may sometimes perform wonders in rectifying the misconceptions of the nervous and insane, by falling in with their delusions, admitting them to be well founded, and applying your remedies accordingly. “How is it possible,” I might say to Jurieu, whose case was adverted to in the preliminary

chapter of the present treatise, “ How is it possible that such a circumstance, as that you assume, could possibly have taken place?” His answer might be, “ I know not *how* it has taken place, but that it is so, I have the evidence of my feelings to testify.” Assuredly, then, it would be the duty of a physician to admit the event, and set about exorcising, or in some way expelling this same beast of blasphemy from the entrails of his patient; and from my own observation, I think, for the most part, more good is effected by these admissions and corresponding practice, than from almost any plan of treating nervous affections. “ Aye,” says our patient, “ I have now got hold of a penetrating and a feeling physician; he understands, he perceives the reality of the complaint under which I am suffering, and instead of laughing at, prescribes for me,” There cannot be a doubt that medicine received from a prescriber, under such circumstances, will prove more efficacious than those administered from the sceptical practitioner; and it has been well said to be of little consequence whether a patient be cured through the medium of the imagination, or the stomach. John Hunter’s bread pills will immediately suggest themselves to some of my medical readers.

By the way, of Mr. Hunter, I may as well in this place as in any other, advert to that morbid condition of mind, to which indeed I have already slightly alluded to, viz.—that of apprehended impotence on the part of some nervous persons, whose educational habits have been such as to foster this false feeling,

and give it all the character of a most deplorable disorder. Mental or imaginary impotence is a much more common affair than is suspected by those who, not being professional men, are not likely to be made confidants on these delicate and distressing points. The great mischief in these cases is, that a person may be convinced of his error by reason, and still retain the morbid feeling—the venereal act being one in which all reasoning must be lost in voluptuousness. That this kind of feeling in reference to sexual desire, but apprehended deficiency of power, embittered the existence of the celebrated Swift, I feel convinced, in spite of the contrary opinion of Dr. Beddoes, who all along speaks of the case as one of induced debility; and at this moment in which I am writing, I have no doubt that there are very many in this town who are acutely suffering under the false consciousness that they have the will, without the power, of entering into the married state. John Hunter's remedy in this case was, beside his bread-pills, to cause his patients so to place themselves, with reference to a female, as that they might have an opportunity of satisfying their desires, but before hand to engage that whatever such desires might be, they would not indulge them. One especial instance he relates of this *ruse de guerre* having completely succeeded; and medical men will, as far as they *can* consistently with circumstances, give the same counsel; and if properly contrived, such counsel will be followed by the happiest effects, for when once the spell is broken, the disorder is perfectly cured.

Against unhappy occurrences, in reference to sexual circumstance, and more especially for the purpose of insuring against the habits of solitary indulgence, Dr. Beddoes proposes, that from very early years, children of both sexes should be initiated into the mysteries and secrets of connected existence, and thus they would learn to avoid practices, and discourage feelings that often overcast "the meridian of life with a cloud of misery, which neither skill nor science shall be able afterwards to disperse;" but I fear his motions, like some of our political and moral speculatists, are formed too much in the abstract, and without reference to those feelings which, at any rate, in civilized life, give a charm and value to sexual endearments; but this is ground upon which I may not proceed far, and I have only ventured to the extent that I have, from the consciousness of its being part of the duty of a writer on mental alienation to touch more directly, or more indirectly, upon all the sources of insane feeling.

I am reminded, by allusion to this topic, of the great benefit which is often done to a nervous invalid by putting his morbid condition upon its proper footing. It will be understood that I have all along gone on the assumption that to reason with a madman is to argue our own insanity, but there is a state of alienated perception in which you may, with good effect, endeavour to prove to your patients that they are no more accountable for their disordered feelings, than is a patient under the delirium of fever responsible for his conduct during

the period of its lasting. Numerous are the instances which come under the cognizance of a medical practitioner, where the patient's sufferings are greatly aggravated by an apprehension of mental and moral turpitude; and when you can prove to them that it is bodily and not properly mental derangement under which they are suffering, that their malady is physical and not moral, you diminish materially the anguish with which sensitive minds contemplate their aberrations. Females of the most rigid principle and of the most correct habits, are especially subjected to these self-inflections, when their nervous system undergoes dreadful mutations, from certain physical alterations and involuntary excitations of the uterine organs; and I hope not to be suspected of a desire to advance any thing against the interests of true religion, when I intimate that the remedy applied for from spiritual instructors is sometimes destructive of its own design; and it is in such affections as those to which I am now referring, that the truths and solemnities of religion must be impressed on the mind with a zeal that shall be well regulated by good sense, and limited by discrimination.

In regard "to religious instruction of lunatics," where the mind is completely alienated, I am of opinion also that the anticipations of those who, in the best spirit, proposed it, will be miserably disappointed. Even the daily reading of prayers is nugatory, if not farcical, before an indiscriminate assembly of mad persons, and can only be justified

upon the principle that diurnal or periodical exercises of a spiritual kind, may have a tendency to preserve order in an establishment—in some measure to humanize those who are not so far gone in moral alienation, as to be without some sense of spiritual accountability—and perhaps the minds of the attendants, whose routine of duty is calculated to foster any thing but religious impressions, may, in some measure or in some instances, be preserved from complete obliteration of such impressions, by the mere formality of even prayer-reading. Beyond these probable and by no means certain benefits, it has appeared to me, in fact, as I confess I should beforehand have expected, that the legislative provision of a spiritual instructor for a mad-house has been founded rather upon benevolent feelings, than upon much knowledge of the constituents of insanity.

It will, perhaps, appear strange, that in the indication of those practices that are likely to prove serviceable to the nervous, the melancholic, or the mad, I have not much insisted on the necessity for exercise: this indeed is of such obvious good, in almost all affections where it can be had recourse to, that I had well nigh neglected an especial reference to it. But even the management of this remedy requires judgment, for mere exercise to the nervous is often so irksome, that the force obliged to be employed for urging it is often fatal to its own design. I have lately had a long attendance on a patient who was, in some respects, better circumstanced when more thoroughly alienated, than he is now that a

considerable approximation to absolute rectitude of feeling has been effected. When he was in his first estate I could command his removal from his chair and oblige him to walk, but now, such is his inveterate objection against rising from his seat, and such his present power of defying forcible measures, that he is doing an irreparable injury to his constitution by his sedentary habits. I am almost in the daily expectation of finding more unequivocal threats than have yet appeared of dropsy or paralysis.

When, therefore, I speak of exercise as a cardinal point to be attended to in the management of mental sickness, I would urge the propriety of endeavouring to raise motives for, rather than to recommend exertion. One half of our hypochondriacs, had they earlier been induced to adopt what is so very obvious a remedy for low spirits, would now have been in comparative enjoyment, instead of being the prey of a thousand gloomy fancies. It is remarkable and worthy observation, that not only the health but the temper of our domesticated animals becomes manifestly injured by undue confinement in the house, and that most unequivocally, because this confinement occasions those stagnations and irregular distribution of blood and humours to which slight allusion has been made in the chapter on pathology; and thus the brain is made unduly irritable, or wanting in its accustomed tone; a good illustration of which is given us by Mr. Townscnd, in his Elements of Therapeutics. "I had a friend,"

says this lively writer, “ who was a hard student, buried among his books, in a room of small dimensions, for fourteen hours in the day: he became dyspeptic to a degree that I never witnessed before ; his flatulence was so great for three hours every day after he had eaten his dinner, that by this circumstance, independently of natural inclination, he was obliged to live alone. It happened at the same time that this gentleman had a favourite spaniel, who was always at his side. The faithful animal, who should have been ranging in the woods, being thus confined, was afflicted with a deplorable disease, being troubled exceedingly with flatulency, and *borborigmi* from wind always in motion and grumbling through the colon.

“ With these symptoms of dyspepsia, poor Rover, for that was his name, from being sprightly, became remarkable for languor, want of energy, and depression of spirits. He was evidently jealous and suspicious, insomuch that if any called him by his name and spoke kindly to him, he lifted up his eyelids, and slunk away to hide himself ; (poor Rover had become of ‘ *unsound mind.*’)

“ Happily at this period, some friends *decoyed* our student from his books, prevailed on him to get on horseback, to accept of greyhounds, and to go early to the field.

“ Rover followed with reluctance, but, by degrees, they both contracted a fondness for the sport : a long separation took place between our student and his books, and escaping thus from the occasional

causes of debility, whilst he enjoyed the diversions of the field, with fresh air and exercise, on horseback, he lost every symptom of disease; and his faithful Rover, participating in the same diversions, without the assistance of other tonics or astringents, regained his wonted energy; no longer depressed by flatulence and depression of spirits," (his mind became '*sound*' again.)

In conclusion, I may urge upon all, and especially upon those whose habits and callings are sedentary, to contrive some motive for daily and regular walking; even should they not appear at present inconvenienced by their confinement, the cloud will be insensibly collecting, that shall sooner or later darken their spirits, or break upon them in the fulness of apoplectic stertor. A physician with whom I was well acquainted, and who scarcely ever was upon his legs, used to say to me, that he found no inconvenience in sitting day after day in his carriage and in his study—nor did he, so far as his immediate feelings were concerned—but he died suddenly and prematurely, from an apoplectic stroke, which I verily believe might have been averted, had he made less use of his carriage and his books, and more of his limbs: in contrast with his case, I will just state, that last week I conversed with a veteran in literature and in years, whose powers of mind no one can question, however they may differ from him in speculative points: this gentleman has preserved the health of his body, and the "*soundness*" of his mind through a long course of multifa-

rious and often depressing circumstances, by a steady perseverance in the practice of walking every day. It is curious, that he has survived for a very long period, almost all the literary characters that were his friends and contemporaries, at the period in which his own writings excited so much public attention; almost all of those who have dropped into the grave one after the other, while he has continued on in an uninterrupted course, were men of far less regular habits, and I am obliged to add also, of much less equanimity of mind; but the preservation of this equanimity has, I verily believe, been mainly insured by the unvaried practice to which I have referred, and which to others would prove equally available, if steadily and perseveringly pursued. "Were I a gentleman, Dr. Uwins," my neighbour, Mr. Abernethy, used to say to me, "I would never get into my carriage;" and certain it is, that many disorders of the most troublesome kind, beside "unsoundness of mind," may be traced to the idle habit of carriage gestation.

CHAPTER XI.

MEDICAL MANAGEMENT OF THE INSANE.

NOTHING could be more inconsistent than the reports made by medical men before the commissioners of enquiry, as to the curability of insanity. This lauded one plan of treatment, that another ; emetics were to do every thing, according to the opinion of some, purgatives were reported by others, as almost the only medicinals upon which any reliance could be placed. This party talked of reducing, that of exciting ; cold bathing was almost the catholicon of some physicians, others were avowedly more partial to warm bathing—but the most remarkable circumstance was, that many respectable men expressed their opinion, that very little could be done in madness by any medicinal measures, while others asserted insanity to be the most curable of all the maladies to which man is subject.

Whence all this discrepancy and contradiction ? In a great measure, I would be bold enough to say, in consequence of the subject being regarded in too empirical a light. Medical men have spoken of curing lunacy, as the vulgar talk of curing a cough. Indeed, while a specific cognomen is made to include so

many varieties of degree, the question respecting the curable or incurable nature of insanity cannot well be put. Curable? most certainly it is, when originating from a known cause of a remedial nature, when connected with a bodily affection of an obvious and tangible kind, when taken early under proper cognizance, when happening to the comparatively young, when the constitution it attacks is good, and when the remedial measures are instituted with decision under the guidance of discernment. Incurable? undoubtedly, when it is a disorder of very old age, and comes upon an individual in that gradual and insidious manner, so faithfully delineated by Le Sage, in the concluding part of his inimitable work. When it is the consequence of a sabre or other wound occasioning an organic lesion of the brain, when it results from an inveterate apoplexy of a particular kind, when other diseases of the brain have produced an organic alteration in a portion of the brain mass, when it is connected with an incurable epilepsy, when the exciting cause has been so sudden and so intense that the whole system of thought and feeling is overturned, as it were, from its base, as in the case I have cited from Mr. Hill; or when the malady has run on from a functional into an unequivocally structural state, which is often the case in the course of a year; but sometimes it takes a longer, sometimes a shorter period, to effect this irremediable change.

In the course of the present section I intend first to offer a few remarks on brain conditions, prior to

the full induction of what would by all be called insanity, and then to treat of the remedial process which the latter calls for.

Apoplexy. In strict propriety this term ought only to be made applicable to sudden deaths, as if from a stroke; and it is a curious fact, that the antients attached something preternatural even to persons affected with an apoplexy; the poor subjects of it were considered the victims of heaven's immediate interposition, and they, as well as the insane generally, were called *εμβροντητοι*. In the present day we are a little more physiological and merciful in our views of sentient disorder, but still there is room for much reform in the terminology employed to express these diseased conditions.

Apoplexy has generally, of late years, been considered as sanguineous, serous, and nervous; the first term implying a fulness of blood or extravasation of it on some part of the encephalon; the second, serous discharges from these blood-vessels, (either the consequence of plethora or weakness;) the third implies that the sentient office of the brain may be impaired without the blood-vessels being at all implicated.

These views are, however, too much bounded by systematic limits. It is not seldom that a species of chronic action shall have place in the vessels of the brain or its membranes, which shall last a considerable time, proceed to a considerable length, be the occasion of much uneasiness and irritation upon the patient's feelings, and at last produce the absolutely apoplectic condition of suspended

sense and motion : this state sometimes terminating in aberrated rather than suspended perception, and then being more entitled to the name of insanity, according to the general acceptation of the word.

Now it is this condition of the brain which it behoves the pathologist and practitioner especially to recognize as a prelude to apoplexy or madness. I have already, I hope, said enough to show that I am not bitten by the inflammation-*phobia*, and to convince the reader who may have condescended to look over my pages, that my general doctrine is any thing but inflammation of the brain and maniacal excitement being identical things ; but of this I am convinced, that a great proportion of our suicide cases, and a large number of mental aberration, owe their origin to the vascular, insidious, slow-action in the brain and its membranes now supposed.

This is especially the case in the insanity of those individuals who, by their professional calling and public functions, stretch their brain power beyond its capacity of endurance—and when we hear of the fate of such men as Romilly, Whitbread, and Londonderry, we should look upon these men as having been upon the brink of either apoplexy or madness, and only having been preserved from it by their own hands !

But it is not confined to such examples as these. It was only last night I was called to a lady who lies under the feelings of maniacal excitement. She has had two attacks of puerperal insanity before the present, and the disorder has now rushed upon

her with full force after confinement. But the circumstance of especial interest in the present occasion is this, that some time since she lost her husband, and, to the surprise of every one, was not so apparently agitated in mind as might have been anticipated. But from that time she began to shew indications of peevishness, and waywardness, and dissatisfaction, to such a degree, and in so remarkable a contrast with her previous placidity, that the servant immediately about her person was compelled reluctantly to leave her.

In this case, I have no doubt, had it been medically scrutinized, there would have been found external marks of the interior condition now supposed, and medical treatment of an appropriate kind might have been made to tell with good effect. The patient should have been carefully preserved from all undue excitement. Her head should have been kept high on her pillow when in bed ; mild alternatives administered ; the secretions particularly attended to ; narcotics, especially fox-glove, on which I shall have more to say immediately, carefully administered according to idiosyncrasies, and some kind of vicarious irritation set up in other parts of the frame. No *very* active measures, however, would have been proper in her state, because of the condition of the uterine system, and because, moreover, the indication was that of regulating and diverting excitement from the brain, rather than that of depressing power. The asthenic

character of the cerebral irritation ought to have been sedulously recognized.

I am rather apprehensive that the event may not be a happy one, notwithstanding our patient is young, inasmuch as I regard the present state of things as sequential to that condition of the brain above supposed ; and it appears to me probable that a degree of effusion may have already taken place, or the membranes have become disorganized. In a more elderly person, and in one not pregnant, apoplexy might have resulted from the state of brain which occasioned those symptoms of irritability above adverted to.

When a person recovers in some measure from more decided apoplexy ; and insanity, rather than paralysis, is the consequence, not much can be expected from medical treatment. Indeed, hæmorrhagic apoplexy I consider as only remediable by a process of nature, and it is, I conceive, questionable whether the extent of blood-letting which is absolutely demanded in mere fulness and vascular rush, as it were, may not be rather injurious than beneficial, when the vessels have already thrown out a quantity of blood upon the brain, and nothing is left to hope for, excepting the gradual formation of what is named the apoplectic cyst—where an adventitious membrane being formed round the mass of coagulated blood, its absorbents gradually take up this mass, and leave the brain with some measure of functional integrity, but not in a very good state ;

for the altered circulation, and the loss of that portion of the brain power which shall have been particularly interfered with, for the most part induces a fresh attack of haemorrhage, and the patient's life, or limbs, or intellects succumb. It may be always predicted of a person who has been once the subject of haemorrhagic apoplexy, that he will never be the same person, either in mind or body, that he was before; and the haemorrhagic is principally to be distinguished from the apoplexy of mere fulness, by its leaving palsy or demency behind it.

Now, beyond bleeding and purging, I know nothing to which we can attach much value in apoplexy; it is, however, of importance that, while we are decided and bold in cases of abolition of sense, occasioned by a rush of blood and inordinate fulness, with sthenic condition of body and brain, that we stay our hands from too much depletion, either in the apoplexy of haemorrhage or that of serous debility. Indeed, this 'last' is perhaps not of very common occurrence; but there is a chronic condition of brain, which may be viewed as in some measure allied to a serous state of the organ, and which is often to be met with in early life. Children are constantly under my inspection, whose brains, instead of going through the natural or healthy process of growth, become enlarged, and the infantine faculties are in corresponding hebetude; but which children you cannot pronounce to have positive hydrocephalus, even of the chronic kind; it should

rather seem that there is a debility in the exhalent, or rather, supplying vessels, and a proportionate weakness in those vessels which take up part of the deposit, so that although growth or enlargement goes on, and is even increased unduly, the substance thus developing itself is not true and healthy brain-mass. In these cases I have found abundant benefit to attend the use of exceedingly small doses of fox-glove. Two drops of the saturated tincture given three times a day, are soon followed by a manifest improvement. The exhalent and absorbent vessels, or, if you please, the exhalent and absorbent power of the blood-vessels, is increased by these small doses of digitalis; the pulse becomes improved, the flesh more firm, and the brain in a better state. When with these appearances of the brain, a disordered condition of the mesenteric vessels displays itself by tumid knotty abdomen, and alvine discharges of an unhealthy appearance, I combine two or three grains of the *Hydrag. cum cretā* with the night-dose of fox-glove; but although some might be disposed to ascribe all the benefit to this last medicine, they would be in error in so doing, since I very often administer the other medicine alone, and with as much satisfactory result as can be expected to follow any curative plan applied to chronic maladies.

There is another state of things in which I have found—at least if my perceptions do not mislead me—this extraordinary drug to be administered with extraordinary success. Patients are constantly ap-

plying with complaints of feelings about the head, and throughout the whole frame, which produce an indescribable irritability; their tempers, they say, are soured they know not why; their thoughts are confused in a manner they cannot account for; they feel at times as if they were going to lose their senses. Now, if added to these statements of your patients you find a sort of knitting in the brow, a wiryness, as also a quickness about the pulse, and a febrile condition of the skin, with the secretions rather less and of a higher colour than *merely* nervousness gives rise to, it is fair to presume upon some such condition of the brain as that in the puerperal case alluded to above, and it will be found that fox-glove often applies itself to these cases with happy effect. I am now speaking of adult affections, and the average dose of the medicine I am accustomed to order is from ten to fifteen drops of the saturated tincture two or three times a day. In these instances we have the arterial power, or rather irritation, lessened, while a general tone is at the same time imparted; and it is a very curious fact, that digitalis, when it does do good in these chronic irritations, always improves the pulse by improving the tone of the arteries.

Of *epilepsy*, in connection with madness, much need not be said. I must confess there are circumstances which at once connect together, and distinguish apoplexy from epilepsy, that are to me very puzzling; and it certainly behoves them who satisfy themselves with having given the rationale

of epilepsy, when they say it is a determination of blood to the brain, either generally or partially implicating the organ, to say why this same determination now brings about abolition of sense and motion, and causes apoplexy, and now is followed by all the horrors and convulsions of an epileptic paroxysm.

Epilepsy, however, when connected with madness, is, for the most part, dependent upon some organic affection of the brain, and is then incurable; if it be merely a particular and inexplicable mode by which a peculiar mobility of nerve is manifested, it will sometimes, as I have witnessed in my own practice, give way to the *nitras argenti*, commenced in quarter of a grain doses, and gradually mounted up to two or three grains. When the medicine is effectual, there is almost always more or less of that alteration of the skin produced, which, carried to any extent, becomes almost as deplorable as the disorder itself,—and it is lasting.

The sympathetic epilepsy caused by worms, or any stomach or intestinal irritation, will often yield, as if by a charm, to those medicinals which act upon the first passages. I have heard physicians of character and experience, speak of thirty minim doses of the *oleum terebinthinae*, as exceedingly efficacious in idiopathic epilepsy, but I suspect that when this does do good, it is by means of exciting a sort of vicarious irritation on the mucous surfaces; and now, having mentioned vicarious irritation, I may, seeing that I purposely

deviate from the ordinary routine of announcing such a disorder, and such a remedy, in a systematic way, allude to the principle and practice of setting up disorder in one part, for the purpose of knocking it down in another.

Whether the *similia similibus* principle of the homoiopathists has any of this agency in view, I am not aware, seeing that I am no adept in the new doctrine, but the old *contraria in contrariis* system, is very considerably regulated by the notion of vicarious irritants. Indeed, the very essence of all therapeutic agency has been pronounced a modification of the principle now referred to.

In respect to its application in nervous affections, we might imagine, listening to the representations of some practitioners, that we had only to conduct it in a proper manner, and its success would be assured to us. I am sorry to say, that in the pamphlet of one author, on the doctrine of mucous membrane irritation in the bowels; and in that of another on the excitation of the skin by tartrate of antimony, there are accounts of cures, which others not being able to realize, cannot help looking upon as, in some measure, a representation of what these respectable authors hoped, rather than what they actually witnessed.

There are instances, however, in which even the moderate computer of medicinal power will be satisfied that he has effected much good by blisters, either kept open for some time; by the tartrate of

antimony ointment, or liniment; and in more chronic cases, by sctons.

The lady to whom I have just referred, has the cerebral affection under which she labours, attended with such decided characters of what the Brunonians call asthenia; and the irritation has been of such long standing, and her habit is so spare, and delicate, and irritable, that we agreed (Mr. White, of the Kent Road, and myself) upon the inexpediency of blood-letting; and in lieu of it, ordered the tartrate of antimony to the spine. A blister on the head had been proposed by a medical friend who accidentally visited her, but, for my own part, I am generally averse from stimulant applications on the scalp, both because I have for the most part, nay, almost invariably, found that they add irritation to irritation, and because the principle of vicarious agency, is that of exciting action, not immediately on, but at some little distance from the part implicated by the morbid state. Cold evaporating lotions are, with but little exception, demanded for the scalp, warmth at a distant part, as to the feet and legs, and irritants in the neighbourhood of, but not immediately upon the affected organ.

When the brain is manifestly inflamed, as marked by the intolerance of light, red eyes, weak pulse, and fever, especially if that inflammation be of the sthenic kind, we shall find our account in pretty free and copious bleeding; but, as I have before intimated, there is much error, and much danger too

in considering and treating all brain irritation as constituted of brain inflammation.

We now and then hear from the phrenologists, that a part of the scalp over the espeial organ affeeted will be found hotter than others; and that on this part we must apply our leeches, when we bleed topieally; for myself I can say, I have never been satisfied on this point, either in reference to faet, or to the required remedy; for even could we be sure that inereased loeal heat indieated an inordinate working of the organ immediately under, we ought, as I think I have before intimated, to recollect that a different system of vessels supplies the interior and external parts of the skull, and also that exelitement and heat do not neeessarily imply any inflammation at all. I may add, too, the diffieulties which would attend our desire of limit and preeision in these affairs; beeause the external expansion of the organ affected may be very small, and the leeehes being no phrenologists, would easily run from combativeness to destruetiveness, and thus one of them might be undoing what the other was doing. I shall be eonsidered as any thing but a true disciple of the new ered by these intimations; but I am compelled to eonfess, that hitherto, I have never witnessed any *remedial* influenee from phrenologieal doectrine, and I have heard what has seemed to me but ill calculated to eonfirm its reetitude. A young lady, manifestly to all beside the person alluded to was dying of eonsumption; the complaint had been partly occasioned by some thwarted attaeh-

ment, I think ; and there were sexual affections of a marked kind accompanying the pulmonary complaint : my story goes on to say, that but a few days before her dissolution, the phrenologist of the consultation affirmed, that she only required her organ of amativeness to be set to rights, and she would do very well. *Non tali auxilio.* Systems, however important and however tenable, when duly and moderately defended, may be much injured by the misplaced enthusiasm of its devoted advocates.

But to return to head affections. There is one especially which demands to be carefully distinguished from maniacal excitement on the one hand, and phrenitis or inflammation on the other. Under the term *delirium tremens* are included symptoms which, in themselves, and with reference to brain irritation, would seem to argue such vascular disturbance as to call peremptorily for the lancet ; but in which, if you bleed at any rate more than once, you will find you are decidedly on the wrong track. *Delirium tremens* is the disorder of drunkards. It is marked by a tremulous motion of the extremities—by a full and prominent eye—by great brain disturbance, so much so as to excite the patient to do, what in doing he occasionally falls down a lifeless corpse—and by a general error of the perceptions. In the very last case I saw (it was with Mr. Hughes, of High Holborn) the patient took hold of the sheet, and supposing it to be a newspaper, read, and corrected himself as he read ; and there was one very remarkable symptom, showing the degree of brain

disturbance, viz. that, having got the sheet before him into a sort of double, and being annoyed at the inconvenience produced by it, he said, " How troublesome these double sheets of the Times are," or something to that effect. The pulse, under these circumstances, is generally quick, but not small and hard as in membranous inflammation ; and I repeat it to be of the utmost consequence to distinguish this affection from common madness on the one hand, and phrenitic inflammation on the other.

Opium in delirium tremens is our great sheet-anchor. We may bleed once so as to make room, as it were, for the stimulating, or supporting, or supplying, or whatever principle of agency we may choose to ascribe to opium ; but upon this we must mainly rest. In one very recent case which I was attending with my friend, Mr. Davis, of Chancery Lane, the quantity of opium was so large, that not having taken notes of the practice myself, I did not dare to say, in print, how much of this drug, with other excitants, our patient took. I therefore wrote to Mr. Davis, and the following is his reply : " My dear Sir, I perfectly recollect, that for three days and three nights N— took, every two hours, two grains of opium and three grains of camphor, with about three-fourths of a bottle of brandy in the twenty-four hours. He then took for, I think, two days, the camphor and opium every four hours, from which time they were gradually discontinued."

I do by no means wish to intimate, that all cases

of the malady now under notice either demand or will admit of the opium being carried to such an extent as this; but I do wish to say, that as certainly as the free use of the lancet will kill a patient affected with delirium tremens, so as certainly will opium, fully and largely administered, prove its cure. The *similia similibus* doctrine is here illustrated, but the plan seems just the reverse of the homoiopathists; so far as I can understand them, they give infinitely small quantities of what produced the disease in order to cure it, while here, doses of medicine are given, which, had the patient not been under the inordinate influence of excitants before, would inevitably occasion death.

When alluding to the case now under treatment, in the Kent Road, I might have introduced a remark or two on *puerperal insanity*, more strictly so named.

In this affection, which for the most part makes its appearance some time after, occasionally before delivery, the patient often, from a condition of calmness and quietude, as if every thing were going on well, suddenly manifests a change of temper—she becomes peevish and restless, and disposed to be querulous with every thing about her. It is not long before decided mania is established; and I think I have seen higher excitement in this than under almost any circumstances of madness. Expressions of the most strange, and sometimes of the most blasphemous and libidinous kind, are uttered by females who, when well, had been marked by

delicacy and purity in the extreme, and “the action” is often, unless timely prevented, “suited to the word.” Here purgatives, sometimes of a drastic nature, are demanded, and blood-letting is called for pretty freely; but I have almost always found my account in administering, even in this malady, pretty considerable quantities of opium *immediately after the bleeding*.

I have a theory on the benefits attending the exhibition of opium directly that blood has been withdrawn; it appears to me, that besides calming and quieting the nervous system, it gives that sort of tone and resistance to the capillary vessels which proves preventive of re-action and consequent effusion; however, I must recollect my old preceptor, Dr. Gregory, on the value attached to medical doctrines, and would rather content myself with the fact, that both in this malady and in many others, where we hesitate about bleeding on the one hand, and the prescription of opium on the other, we may get the good of both without the evil of either, by first using our lancet, and immediately afterwards throwing in, as we used to say, our opium.

In puerperal insanity, cold evaporating lotions to the head, either made of gin, or of the *liquor ammoniæ acetatis*, with half a fluid ounce of sulphuric æther to an eight-ounce lotion, will prove of much more efficacy than blisters to the scalp; indeed I have, for the most part, been disposed to avoid blistering altogether in puerperal disorders, as the principle mainly to go upon is that of calming and quieting,

rather than that even of diverting irritation. I am inclined to think, that in all these cerebral irritations the position of the patient's head is not sufficiently attended to—it ought always to be preserved as high as is at all consistent with the recumbent position of the body.

As in epilepsy, so in very many other morbid states of the nervous system, which have received the nosological names of *catalepsy*, *hysteria*, *chorea*, &c. it is not easy to say how the convulsions, and contortions, and fixedness of the body are connected with brain influence; and we must know something more than we do at present of cerebral structure in connexion with cerebral action before we can give any thing like a satisfactory solution of these mobile conditions of nerve and muscle. At times it would appear that the sentient portions of the brain are not in the least implicated, for, while the patient in *chorea* is suffering under the most agitating affection of the limbs and the body, the intellect is as clear and unclouded as if nothing were the matter; that they sometimes lead to brain disturbance of a positive kind is, however, pretty evident from what you often find after a long continuance of the maladies; and the only fatal case that I ever witnessed of *chorea* was manifestly fatal by its having produced, or rather by its having become, in the course of time, decided hydrocephalus. On these several affections, then, as having no direct, or immediate, or necessary alliance with madness, I am not called upon to enlarge; and shall only add, that physio-

logists, who are taking pains to ascertain the true theory of sentient being, ought to be regardful of these occurrences as distinctive from, in one sense, and in another connected with those organs and functions that regulate mental phenomena and circumstance. An hysterical girl is sometimes as mad as madness can make her for a time, but the storm quickly blows off, and calmness and serenity are immediately manifest.

Before entirely quitting the consideration of those disorders, which are directly or indirectly connected with insanity, I may just allude to some female conditions that are at any rate quite as much allied to hysteria as they are to madness. *Nymphomania* is a term given to those ebullitions of the frame which grow out of much mobility in the nervous organization, while the uterine, or rather the genital system, is also in a state of high excitability. I have already intimated, that it behoves the medical practitioner, in these distressing occurrences (doubly distressing because they are attended with a morbid consciousness of delinquency) to soothe the mind, if any mind be left, and endeavour to make the unhappy patient take physical and correct views of the malady. If she can be brought to feel in this way the cure will be half accomplished.

The mere medical part of the treatment in nymphomania must be regulated according to the strength of the malady and the strength of the patient. All excitement ought to be withheld, and that sometimes rather by stealth than in a formal and

systematic way—laxatives should be applied to the pubic region, and while the bowels are kept loose, by mild rather than stimulating purges, it is often requisite to administer gentle tonics, such as small quantities of *ferrum ammoniatum*, in order that the mobility of the nervous system be kept under. Whether this last plan should be pursued or not, must be left in a very great measure to the good sense and discernment of the physician; but I hold it necessary, both in this complaint and in all others of the nervous class, to be cautious against a too free admission of the principle, that to lower and reduce is to fulfil every indication. It is scarcely necessary to add, that change of scene and circumstance is important in these sexual irritations, more especially when any thing of individual attachment has had to do with the immediate production of the disorder. I was going to say, let no spiritual advisers be admitted to patients of the description I am supposing, but those who unite thorough principle with excellent judgment. We Protestants are disposed to think that the economy of Catholicism is very unfriendly to the moral well-doing of nymphomaniac patients. Both in reference to this faith and to that of the Methodists much misconception and misrepresentation may be supposed; but, on the other hand, individuals with the best intention are likely to mislead, and be misled, unless well on their guard against the bad principles which enter into the composition of the human frame, and against encouraging in themselves and in individuals of the

softer sex feelings which, under the semblance of pure spirituality, are mixed up, to say the least, with human passions and transports. But I catch myself sermonizing when I ought to be employed medically, and I have already hinted at these delicate points under another division of my treatise.

Let me, before I conclude this part of my subject, again protest against any specific or nosological limit being applicable to the several disorders thus briefly pourtrayed—as a young child who draws one leg after her, in walking, is equally the subject, in essence, of chorea, or St. Vitus' dance, as she who is obliged to be bound down on her bed to keep under violent distortions and ungovernable gesticulations; so is a young girl nymphomanic who has undue sexual propensities of the slightest degree, joined with nervous perceptions which are also undue but slightly so. Nothing is more important, both in pathology and practice, than keeping the mind clear from the notion of a disorder being a specific something appended to the body, as an ingredient is thrown into a chemical compound and changes the whole mass.

As females in early life are disposed, from constitution and circumstances, to deviations from the healthy standard, the earliest indications of which demand recognition, so, at the time of what is called change of life, nervousness and different degrees of insanity are apt to be engendered by the process of adjustment to the new order of things; and in these cases, it will be the duty of the medical adviser to

bring in art to the aid of nature. Congestions, or tendencies to congestions about the liver, are apt to be induced by the lessened call that is made upon the blood vessels which supply the uterine system, and either in the way formerly alluded to, or from the new feelings and sympathies which occur, cerebral irritation, sometimes of a formidable kind, is not seldom induced.

I have just seen a lady who, but for the intervention of medicine under these circumstances, (and the susceptibility lasts for some time, both prior to and after menstrual cessation,) would, I think, have sunk into a confirmed melancholy. Her temperament is rather of the melancholic kind—she became full in habit, had boils break out in different parts of the body, and from being at first listless and abstract, became, at length, low and desponding.

In this case there was ground to work on: the indications to follow were sufficiently obvious, and the remedies, joined with faith in her physician, have proved very effective. The *compound decoction of aloes*, (a composition of considerable virtue,) *subcarbonate of ammonia*, another excellent medicinal, very small doses of blue pill, and the tartrate of antimony ointment to the nucha, were the principal drugs prescribed. The call here was decidedly for what, in the school of the humoral pathology, is called the *deobstruent* plan of treatment, and stimulant emulgents justified, in their effects, the propriety of the principle.

With respect to mercury in cerebral affections, or

lowness of spirits manifestly connected with liver torpor, I am almost an homoiopathist. It is surprising what exceedingly small doses will seem to unlock the door, as it were, which is between the patient and health, while you may bungle and batter at it in vain with your large quantities, and what are often very improperly termed decided measures. I have known the sixth part of a grain of calomel take off nervous gloom and depression, which had remained obstinately immovable by the more common doses, whether given alone or combined with purgatives or stimulants; and even the compound decoction of aloes, to which I just now alluded, is, in many cases, more efficacious when administered in doses of one or two drachms, and continued for some length of time, than in the more usual quantities of half ounces and ounces.

Ammonia, I may repeat, is of the utmost utility, when, in conjunction with evidences of sluggish circulation, you have brain disorder; it diffuses itself through the system with a promptitude and effect that are at times exceedingly striking; and I have found it of singular utility in those cases of brain irritation which the gouty are obnoxious to before the complete development of the gouty action upon its usual locality. In gout, I have thought (but I may be wrong) that the especial good of carbonate of ammonia is in a great measure referrible to its uniting an alkaline with a stimulating property.

When purgatives are demanded in affections of

the head—as when are they not? the practitioner should endeavour to ascertain whether the cathartic action is more especially wanted in the larger or the smaller bowels, and the class of aperients is to be selected accordingly. In those examples of brain irritation which are connected with torpid action of the womb, as in the case just alluded to, it is generally proper to use those medicinals the influence of which is principally directed to the lower bowels, such as aloes. When, as in the case of nymphomania, we are desirous of producing a purgative action, and are, at the same time, fearful of stimulating the already excited uterus, the saline purgatives are to be preferred; or if the resinous class be made use of, the articles employed should be such as principally excite the stomach and smaller bowels, such as jalap and rhubarb, and scammony.

There is one principle which applies itself as well to purgative agents as to almost all other medicinals, and which, perhaps, in practice, is not duly recognized; it is that from a combination of articles you frequently get a better agency than from the same quantity of only one material; and then again, one of the ingredients in an aperient pill is, although without action *in se*, abundantly active when employed with an article of which it seems to be a divider of its particles, or a sort of solvent. The celebrated dinner or De Crespigné pill, consists, I believe, of only two grains of aloes, and one of mastiche gum, and yet how active it is often found to be. The syrup of wormwood is, indeed, a

material with which it is ordered to be combined; but it is at the least questionable whether that can add to its virtue.

I will now, in conclusion, and in order to satisfy those who are determined upon abiding by nosological distinctions, make one or two remarks on the treatment required under the separate circumstances of alienation, as pointed out by the nosographer.

In *melancholia*, if in any kind of aberrated intellect, purging is more especially called for, and the cathartics for the most part must be taken from the drastic and stimulating order. We have abandoned the antient notion of there being any specific quality in hellebore in mental disorders; nor, indeed, is it precisely known what species of the hellebore the antients employed—but it is still universally admitted, that rousing drastic cathartics, combined with mercurials or medicines which act upon the secretions, are for the most part desirable, when the alienation is of a melancholy cast, and where the bowel is torpid. It has been supposed by all writers, antient and modern, that the alimentary and intestinal canal is, as it were, the seat and origin of the mental disturbance; even Aretæus expresses himself to this effect; but I am disposed to think, that in most instances some prior action, or want of action in the brain, induces the constipation, which constipation, on its part, soon pays the brain what it owes, with interest. But from whatever cause the torpidity of the bowel is produced, and the consequent

retention of hardened fæces, certain it is, that purgatives, and those of a powerful kind, are requisite.

Some practitioners have expressed themselves more partial to emetics in melancholic torpor. The late Dr. Monro considered the emetic plan in general preferable to the purgative. When tartrate of antimony is employed for this purpose, the dose must be large. We sometimes administer from ten to fifteen grains of it. But the dry emetic, as it has been called, constituted of four or five grains of the sulphate of copper, or from a scruple to half a drachm of the sulphate of zinc, is generally found more efficacious than either antimony or ipecacuanha.

Warm bathing is occasionally attended with very good effect; but perhaps of all remedies that are employed to reduce melancholic excitement, and rouse the torpid frame, the shower-bath is the most efficacious; and when a degree of fear and reluctance is expressed by the patient as to its employment, the effect is often greater, as this fear tends to divert his thoughts, and disposes him to rouse his energies, in order that the repetition of the remedy may be dispensed with.

A practice as old as Celsus has recently been revived, and its success highly spoken of as a secret specific—it is that of keeping the patient in a bath as hot as he can endure it, and directing a stream of cold water at the same time upon his head. I cannot positively assert the fact, but I have reason to

believe that this process was the plan of treatment so much talked of about fifteen or twenty years since, and which, like all other *manias* of the day, was taken up by many persons of rank as the long sought for catholicon in the several kinds of insanity. To a certain extent, this practice may be admissible and efficacious, but it has been carried to an extreme, I may say, of cruelty, which the benefits attending it cannot by any means justify.

When time, with the assistance of these medicinals, shall have, in a great measure, conquered the melancholic feelings, exercise ought to be enjoined in the open air, and the patient may be solicited, not forced, to play at bowls, or to attend to those parts of gardening which do not demand much stooping, or to light reading, according to his previous tastes and habits, and, in short, to any thing and every thing that may call his thoughts away from himself and his morbid feelings. I am always glad to see, in our "coffee-room," novels and newspapers, and musical instruments in requisition; and in the lawn, upon which this coffee room opens, I like to see the bowls lying as if they had been used by some of the patients.

Mania, accompanied with turbulent excitement, demands immediate seclusion. Darkness and solitary confinement are sometimes indispensable. At all events, that kind and measure of control are requisite which shall prevent the patient from injuring himself or others. Threats, however, here are less admissible than when reason is not so

thoroughly overwhelmed by morbid perception; and it is in the excitement of mania that medicinal action is less called for than in most circumstances of mental alienation. When the patient is of a strong sthenic habit, and when marks of inflammation have grown out of all the turbulence, blood may be taken pretty copiously from the arm or the temporal artery, but never let blood-letting be employed in mania as if the disorder were phrenitis. Cold to the head is useful, the shower-bath more especially so, or if that cannot easily be contrived, the douche, or throwing cold water upon the naked head, may be used instead. Bladders of ice may be also applied, but these applications must be instituted or abstained from, not according to the measure of excitement, but in proportion to the prevailing heat of the head. Purgatives of an active rather than a drastic kind are indicated, and it will sometimes be found, that a pretty strong dose of *elaterium* will, by its speedy and peculiar influence, effect a very marked improvement in the patient's state.

In mania, vomiting may be produced, should there be reason to apprehend that the state of the stomach, either as to its contents or its secretions, has had to do with the production of the excitement, which is sometimes the case even when the malady has seemed rather to follow from mental irritation than physical circumstance.

Bleeding, if necessary, or rather under the restrictions enjoined, and purgatives, emetics, and bathing having been premised, a pretty considerable quan-

tiny of opium may be given to calm the still existing irritation, or to dispose the patient to sleep, for this it is very desirable to procure. We are in the practice of employing half-grain doses of the acetate of morphia in the institution, under the notion of the beneficial effects of opium, without its injurious influence being obtained by this form. I must confess myself, however, though at first rather sanguine, now to be doubtful of any superiority that this medicinal has over the common form, but it is certainly as good as is opium itself, and, therefore, we think it desirable still to use it.

Of digitalis I have already spoken. But I may here repeat, that this seems to me to be one of the most efficacious drugs for reducing the excitement even of violent mania, when we shall have premised evacuants either of the blood vessels, the stomach, or the bowels. Dr. Cox tells us, that "no case ought to be abandoned till it has been submitted to a trial of this powerful medicine. I had a patient (he says) whose system was kept saturated, as it were, with digitalis for weeks in succession, whose mental wanderings seemed regulated by the state of his pulse; when the pulse was at ninety, he was constantly furious, at seventy perfectly natural, at fifty melancholy, and at forty half-dead. This man was perfectly cured by such a dose of this remedy as kept the pulse pretty uniformly about seventy." Dr. Cox's swing I really think nothing of, or rather I am totally averse from those trials which seem to imply that in aberrated intellect any thing may be

employed, or any whim gratified which the practitioner pleases to take into his head.

Hypochondriasis is a term mainly employed by the nosologists to mark depression of spirits to the extent of actual misconception on the score of health. Thus you would call an individual an hypochondriac rather than a melancholic, who should fancy his disease had actually occasioned his death, instances of which occasionally occur, and a very remarkable one we have in Mead, of a man who was so fully convinced of his death, that he insisted upon the passing bell being tolled. But the misconception is, of course, subject to the utmost variation in degree, the major number of instances that are met with in general practice being merely false notions in reference to the nature and malignity of disorder. Thus a dyspeptic becomes a hypochondriac if he imagine that the uneasy sensations of his stomach denote more mischief of an organic kind than they actually do. In this form of mental malady, the utmost address is often required on the part of the physician at once to humour the whim of the patient in a certain manner or measure, so as to bring him round gradually and almost by stealth into a due conception of his malady.

It has been absurdly enough made a question, whether hypochondriasis in men and hysteria in women be the same complaint, as if either of them was an actual specific distemper like small pox, or were at all susceptible of being considered apart from the subject of it. The nervous system of

females is more mobile, and, therefore, more subject to run into irregular action of a perturbed kind than that of the male ; and, moreover, the uterine system so much connects itself in almost all nervous disorders of the former, that she is obnoxious to a mode of deranged being different from man ; but to identify, and classify, and separate, in this nosological spirit, one malady from another, is to be engaged as were the schoolmen of old, in raising up nominal into real things, and to dispute for the sake of disputing.

The brain is at fault in the production of hypochondrial conceits ; but it is not seldom seen that a marked condition of dyspepsia, of liver congestion, of intestinal torpor, and of infarctions of the spleen are present, and tend to aggravate the disorder. Our remedies, therefore, must be directed both to the brain and also to the especial organ or organs affected.

Exercise is almost every thing in hypochondriasis. Not the exercise of duty, but of motive. Let it be contrived, that the patient have some object for his walk or his ride, or the exercise will rather prove irksome than salutary. Dr. Mead's hypochondriac, to whom I have just alluded, was cured by the bungling manner in which the bell was tolled : in a fit of passion he got up, all dead as he was, rung the bell himself, went back to his bed, broke out into a perspiration, and was, from that moment, alive and well again ! It may seem a mere commonplace matter to insist upon so trifling a requisite,

but “little things are great to little man;” and no one but he who has seen much of disease can have any conception of the niceties and delicacies demanded on the part of a prescriber for nervous maladies. The smallest effort made in a right direction will succeed, while effort otherwise instituted and pursued will serve to protract rather than to arrest morbid action.*

Deobstruent cathartics are abundantly useful in hypochondriac torpor; and the compound decoction of aloes above spoken of (to which, in general, ought to be added a little more alkali than is in the prescription) will act with signal efficacy. In these cases, haemorrhoidal disorder is apt to be engendered or increased by aloetic medicinals; but to a certain extent this will prove rather salutary than otherwise.

When there is much tendency, as indeed there mostly is, to inaction of the liver, the dandelion used in decoction is an excellent medicine. “I owe all my good health (a lady often says to me) to your prescribing the dandelion of Boulogne fields,

* In a work published a short time since by my friend, Mr. Cooke, of Trinity Square, there are some very instructive remarks, illustrated by cases of much interest, bearing upon the necessity of carefully distinguishing between disorder and ill-temper; or rather proving that hypocondriacal gloom and irritability often steal insensibly upon the frame, in consequence of cerebral and visceral disturbance, which require the early recognition and interference of a medical practitioner, when commonplace observers would regard the affection in the light of mental alienation or moral delinquency.

and to the daily rides you ordered, whether the weather were wet or dry, in the Boulogne woods." Our recent systems of medicine have, I think, rather too much diverted attention from these vegetable deobstruents, which were so much in vogue during the prevalence of the humoral doctrines—the waters of our springs, and the herbs in our fields, and the exercise and interest which, going to seek for health among them, imply, often do much more for an hypochondriac, than all the blue pill that may even be judiciously employed, or all the purgatives of the shops put together; although these last we must, of course, resort to when we are precluded from the employment of the others, either by the extent of the disorder, or by the local circumstances of the patient. Vegetable bitters are often conspicuously serviceable, either in conjunction or alternation, with emulgent medicines.

I will now offer one or two very brief remarks on the power of different medicinals in mental disorder, so far as I have had opportunities of observing them.

Of *digitalis*, I have already had occasion to express my opinion. In the general way, this is a most valuable medicine; but I think Dr. Hallaran quite right in intimating the necessity of previous evacuation from the bowels and the blood-vessels, to the extent that may be admissible. This drug, in maniacal cases, may be carried from ten minims, to thirty and forty, three times a day. But the administration of fox-glove in chronic affections of

the brain, and then by very small doses, seems to me to constitute the principal advantage which this drug possesses in brain derangements.

Bathing, especially the shower bath, is another useful measure for bringing down the ebullitions of insanity. There are very few cases, indeed, where this remedy may not be employed with promised good. The objection of the patient to it sometimes, as above intimated, is rather than not an argument for it; since the practitioner is furnished with an *in terrorem* power, that may be employed without severity.

Warm bathing, as a matter of cleanliness, and as conducive to health, by setting the secretions at work, is a good remedy in chronic affections.

Purging, with a combined view to what is called deobstruent action, is one of our most unequivocally beneficial agents in all brain and nervous disorders. But, as I have elsewhere remarked, "it is not merely a recognition of the principles that purgatives are useful, which ought to regulate practice in these cases; but the practitioner ought to be aware of the necessity of combining, alternating, suspending, increasing, and diminishing the kinds and doses of the medicinals, with an attention very different from that of mere empirical routine."

Opium proves frequently of abundant efficacy in calming the fury of the mad. Like fox-glove, it ought for the most part to be preceded by evacuants. I have already stated my doubts of the superiority of the morphine preparations to common

opium. The old “black drop” is, perhaps, after all, that preparation of opium, which best calms the nervous system, without producing congestion in the brain. The reader will recollect, that there is one sort of insanity (*delirium tremens*) in which opium is almost a charm, a *sine quâ non* medicinal, at least.

Of the *vegetable narcotics*, such as *henbane*, *hemlock*, *nightshade*, *camphor*, *hop*, I have not much opinion. The hop pillow has, in some instances, appeared to sooth and calm, especially in cases where the cerebral excitement has had some connection with gouty action; and tincture of hop, in conjunction with bitters, and light tonics under circumstances of commencing convalescence, may occasionally be administered with advantage; but I should be very sorry to be obliged to do with any of the just named medicinals, to the exclusion of opium and digitalis. Valerian is a good excitant of the nervous power.

Of *vicarious and artificial irritants*, my opinion may be known from what has already been advanced. Tartrate of antimony to the spine, in recent cases, and issues, or setons in chronic disorders, prove more or less efficacious; but he who trusts to their virtues from the high-coloured representations of some writers, will be woefully disappointed. When blisters are employed, they are much better placed in the neck, than over the head.

Mercury, as mercury, I would not put down as a medicine for madness. Some persons have supposed that they could cure all complaints of

this kind, and, indeed, of almost all other kinds, by exciting salivation ; it is a false and mischievous notion. Blue pill, or exceedingly small doses of calomel, often manifest a deobstruent, and therefore sanative power, but to *mercurialize* even the chronically and melancholic insane, is to be miserably misemployed.

Emetics, more especially those composed of equal parts of tartrate of antimony, and sulphate of copper, according to the formula of Marryott, have been greatly extolled by some practitioners, and when the stomach is obviously much implicated with the maniacal excitement, they may be had recourse to with good hope of success. For myself, however, I have not had much experience of their virtues, as I have been generally satisfied with purgative operation. Oil of turpentine, in cases where the nervousness and wandering are connected with disordered conditions of the stomach and bowels, will, in many cases, do abundant good.

In torpid states of the viscera, *electricity* and *galvanism* have been employed, and sometimes advantageously. Their beneficial influence may be added to, by the seeming novelty, and impressive paraphernalia of the process, as in the case before cited, from Dr. Haygarth. I remember once having recourse to galvanism in the establishment, and my object was obtained by the recollection, on the part of the patient, of the unpleasant sensations it occasioned. The case was one in which there was an obstinate determination not to speak. As I had

before relieved aphonia by galvanism, I thought my present patient would be a good subject for its trial ; the first day or two she held out, apparently under the notion that we should soon give her up as a hopeless case, but finding that we persevered, she began to talk, and continued to do so, under the threatened terrors of a repetition of our aphonic remedy.

I may say, finally, that in those paralytic affections which are the consequences of apoplexy, or other faulty condition of the brain, we must be careful, while we endeavour to preserve and restore tone, that we be not too free with those measures which, indiscriminately employed, are calculated to defeat the purpose for which they were instituted. I have seen the brain too much excited by *galvanism*, by *tincture of cantharides*, and by *strichnine* ; all of which may be fairly and legitimately brought in aid of other plans, if commenced with caution, and pursued with judgment.

CHAPTER XII.

RECAPITULATORY.

“ **MADNESS** is a term that means every thing, and means nothing.” Although we admit its essentials to consist in a vivid conception, to the extent of actual belief in unreal things, or the exaltation of the fancy into supposed perception ; as it must at the same time be admitted, that delusion, more or less substantial and confirmed, is the occasional fate of us all, it follows, that the difference between sanity, and acknowledged insanity, is rather a difference in degree, than in kind.

Or take it in another way. “ Madness is a disease of motives ;” the nervous invalid who is not susceptible of sane impulse, who cannot rise from her chair and pace the room, who is incapable, for the present, of feeling for her family as she was wont to feel, merely requires her susceptibility to common motives to be reproduced, or such an application of the motives on the part of others, or as the result of incident, that they shall act with sufficient force to subdue the insensibility or inaptitude, and the malady is cured. Incapacity, was therefore, in her

case, both real and ideal ; but she was, in point of fact, as mad as the loudest bawler in a solitary cell of a lunatic asylum.

The nosological distinctions of systematic authors are not only arbitrary and conventional, but positively fallacious and absurd, when made to designate disease as something abstract and specific. Derangement is a circumstantial, a relative affair ; so that the classification of mania, melancholia, hypochondriasis, &c., are founded in entire misconception of the very nature of disordered essence. Dementia, a-mentia, monomania, may indeed be employed with some propriety, but even these terms are objectionable, if made use of in order to form a distinct line of separation between mental health and mental disorder, all on this side of the line being considered correctness, all on the other incorrectness.

Metaphysics have been brought to bear on the topic of mental disorder, in a sort of poetical, rather than physiological manner. Nothing *ad rem* has been elicited on the nature of erroneous perception and reason, unless the science recently announced, under the designation of phrenology, be admitted as an exception. This science, if science it prove, may be made beneficially operative in preventing aberration of intellect, by its demonstrating the points of attack, and the mode in which the attack may succeed, when there is a constitutional or organic bias "to go wrong."

And the validity of the principles on which the

disciples of the phrenological creed lay claim to notice may be considered as established, when they shew, which it seems they do, that altered form of brain, as indicated by exterior marks, bears a relation, both in quantity and locality, to the exercise of this or of that faculty, or of the indulgence of this or that propensity. The intellectual and moral aspirant, by working his intellectual and moral faculties, brings out the form of his skull in those parts where it is delightful to witness its increment ; the sensualist or the depraved does the same thing for the animal portion of the brain and its investments.

Education, pursued on phrenological grounds, may, by preserving a due adjustment and orderly intercourse between the functions of the brain, tend materially to strengthen the understanding, and thus preserve against natural tendencies to wander from the paths "of truth and soberness."

A definition of insanity must, according to the principles laid down, be a difficult thing. A lunatic is in much the same condition as is a person dreaming, only with this exception, that when the external senses open upon the visions called dreams, they send them instantaneously away ; while the madman, in spite of the information given to him by these senses, continues to dream on. Nay, the senses instead of correcting wandering, sometimes seem to encourage it ; and it is often in the highest degree difficult to determine what a mad person does see or hear in a sensual way, as it were, when he has a thing before him which his imagination, if not

his senses, converts into something else. When, for example, as in a case referred to in the treatise, an individual sits in his bed and pulls his doubled sheet about, complaining of the annoyance of the double Times, is it the newspaper or the bed-clothes that is actually before him, as an object of vision?

Passion is not madness, unless delusion be its excitant: it is, however, in very many cases, difficult to distinguish governable impulse from uncontrollable impulse. But although difficult, it ought always to be attempted; for in the one case the individual is an accountable agent, in the other he is not. The *ira furor brevis* will do for the poet, but not for the metaphysician or moralist.

Madness is sometimes immediately excited by mental circumstance; but even when that is the case, the disorder is bodily; and if we wanted a proof of it, the instantaneous effect of the mental excitant upon the physical functions were sufficient. The breath of a delicate female is rendered unpleasant from the reception of affecting intelligence; and "now to dinner with what appetite you may," has been quoted or heard quoted by every one.

Sometimes these bodily states are more decided, as when obscured intellect follows apoplexy, epilepsy, and other maladies that have nosological names attached to them. When the viscera of the abdomen or of the chest are implicated with depraved feeling and consciousness, it is not always easy to say how far they are so as to cause, and how far as to consequence. A great deal must be left,

after all the pathologist has been able to effect, to individual tact and observation.

Much of the mental ailment of the present day is to be traced to that kind of debility in the brain and nerves, which semi-learning, and false refinement, and ambitious feelings, and querulous habits, occasion. The substitution, also, of vapid articles of diet, in place of more nutritious support, may have an influence in deteriorating nervous energy, and thereby tending to the induction of mental disorder; but it is questionable whether the use of China tea is in itself so productive of insanity as some have conceived. Spirit-drinking, both indirectly and directly, is a decided source of nervous disorder and derangement. False notions of religion tend to unhinge the mind, depress the feelings, and occasion general misconception; and it is a curious fact, that religious insanity is less common among a Catholic population, inasmuch as when implicit faith is to be put in dogmas, the mind is not permitted to doubt and to enquire, and is therefore kept free from that restlessness and wavering on points of belief, which is the state and time that severe doctrines gain an admission among the thoughts, and give rise to dreadful hallucinations. All circumstance, however, which calls with more than common force on the feelings, is likely to dislodge reason from its seat.

The proximate sources, as they are termed by systematics, are not easily ascertained, because we are so ignorant of those mutations in the brain and

nerves which regulate even healthy feelings and consciousness. Certain it is, however, that the heights of raving and depths of gloom, while they plainly enough manifest disordered brain, by no means imply the necessity of that condition of vessels, to express which the term inflammation is used.

There is one species of insanity called delirium tremens, in which the brain condition seems peculiar. It is occasioned by drinking, and is best cured by opium.

The rapid transition from a decidedly insane state to that of sanity, by the substitution of a more obviously organic disorder, is a remarkable feature in mental aberration. Sometimes the absorbent energy is conspicuously at work in effecting these translations; at other times the mode in which they are brought about is as obscure as the circumstances are striking. Madness, even of the highest kind, does not denote positive power. Appearances in the brain and viscera after death, although almost invariably found, are not found with such regularity and precision as to warrant the expectation of any one or more of them in subsequent cases, apparently similar in symptoms.

The question whether madness be or be not curable? and what plans of treatment ought to be pursued? have been instituted too much in the spirit of empiricism. Like other maladies, it is, under some circumstances curable, under others, not.

Commissions of lunacy ought not to issue, unless the person charged with the disorder have at least shewn an inclination to injure his person or his property, or the property and persons of others. We have no right to question the sanity of eccentric, or even wayward and stupid conduct ; and the *de gustibus* maxim may here be applied with marked propriety.

Madhouses ought to be divested of their *peculiar* character, and considered only as hospitals : instead of “mausolea of mind,” they are merely receptacles for that kind of bodily sickness which prevents the proper exercise of the mind. What disgrace or disagreeable attaches itself to delirium ? and is not insanity, even according to systematic shewing, delirium without fever ? Much good is often done by mere confinement, this confinement supposing the separation of the sick from former associations ; and the *in terrorem* principle is also of extensive application, without any cruelty being exercised. The school-boy is happier at school, where he is not allowed to indulge a wayward and froward temper —the maniac is, in like manner, much more happy when surrounded by persons who exercise professional or *ex officio* control, than he is when his high excitations are either permitted to have their full sway, or are only partially and feebly opposed by domestic attendants or friends.

Classifying the insane is a matter about which much of what is false and fallacious has been con-

ceived and broached. All persons who are out of their right senses, ought not to be placed together; respect must be had to age and sex, and previous habits of life, and the especial bearings, and peculiarities, and stages of the malady; but to speak of classing as some speak of it, and *profess* to carry it into effect, is to be guided by misapprehension, or to suppose what is incapable of being realized. Nay, the association of different degrees and kinds of insanity is not seldom a salutary expedient, if practised with discrimination and judgment, for circumstances may be elicited by such associations, which shall make a favourable impression on the mind both of the sick and the semi-convalescent. It is, with few exceptions, better for the relations of the insane to refrain from visiting them till a return to reason is assured.

Suicide is to be considered a condemnable or excusable act, according to the measure of preventive power possessed by the individual at the time of committing it; but it is often extremely difficult to form a correct judgment respecting motive and power, from the circumstance of our not being able, excepting in palpable cases, to judge of interior states by external manifestations. A superstitious cruelty on the one hand, and a lax morality on the other, are equally to be avoided when we aim at precision in reference to the measure of accountability attachable to self-destruction.

In the moral management of madness, the very

nice susceptibilities of the nervous organization ought to be duly recognized. The success of plausible systems of medicine, and the cures effected by unprincipled pretenders to secret remedies, may be made subservient to regular and legitimate practice. We may be occasionally justified even in pious frauds, when we have good reason to presume upon the efficacy of our material. Always let the physician have especial regard to the associating principle in his patient. Much benefit, in many instances, attends a sympathizing manner, and we are more likely to remove false conception by seeming to fall in with it—indeed, the misconception is *not*, in one sense false—than opposing phantoms with the armoury of ridicule.

The opinion of medical men given in courts of law on the subject of insanity is often descrepant in a disgraceful degree; and it is so because a point is assumed—which does not exist—where sanity ends and derangement commences. Madness is a circumstance, not an abstraction. It is a relative, rather than a positive affair. To pronounce a man not mad, is much more difficult than to determine on the measure of insanity which should place him out of the pale of society.

The medical management of the insane demands an attention to several circumstances more or less obviously connected with deranged states; and an individual attempting the very difficult task of re-adjusting lost balances, or, in other words, thrusting out

false conceits from their intertwinnings with the fibres of the frame, ought to have very different views, and be guided by very different principles from those which take cognizance of names rather than things, or regard nosology as a science having its prototype in nature and its foundation in truth.

FINIS.

ERRATUM.

In page 138, line 12, *for* equivocally *read* unequivocally.

NOTE. In looking over the pages I find some misprints, occasioned by the hurry with which I have been compelled to revise the sheets. As there are none, however, which affect the sense of the reading, except that above marked, I have not been anxious to particularize them, partly because they are in themselves trivial, and partly because I am desirous most earnestly to call attention to the one in question, as expressing a sentiment totally opposite to the one intended.

No well regulated mind can for a moment doubt that the recent inquisitions by our statesmen and legislators on the nature of insanity and the economy of lunatic establishments, have been prompted by a grandeur of design and largeness of benevolence: the only room for doubt and distrust is in reference to the complete fulfilment of sanguine expectation. It is in the very spirit and nature of reform to be too condemnatory of what is, and too hopeful of what is to come.

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